













**AN ESSAY**  
**ON THE**  
***NATURE AND DESIGN***  
**or**  
**SCRIPTURE SACRIFICES:**  
**IN WHICH THE**  
**THEORY OF ARCHBISHOP MAGEE**  
**IS CONTROVERTED.**

---

**BY THE LATE**  
**REV. JAMES NICOL,**  
**MINISTER OF THE PARISH OF TRAQUAIR, NEAR PEEBLES.**

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"Give me liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties."

*Milton.*

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## BIÖGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

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THE Author of this posthumous work was a sincere lover of Moral and Theological Truth. His situation as a Minister of the Church of Scotland, in a very retired part of the country, gave him abundance of leisure to prosecute those studies to which his affections were most warmly attached. Blessed with a sound, discriminating, and ardent mind, highly cultivated and enriched, and possessed of a well-chosen library, adapted chiefly to his professional pursuits, he patiently and diligently sought for Truth, and persuaded himself that he had discovered her in some of her essential lineaments, even though he was led to discard some of the opinions in which he had been educated. Writing to the Compiler of this Introduction, rather more than a year before his death, he says,

“Ever since I directed my studies to Theology, I not only considered it an imperious duty, but I found it to be an exalted enjoyment, to bend the whole powers of my mind, fearlessly, but with reverence, to the investigation of Scripture; and convinced that the Scriptures must be interpreted by the same rules which are legitimate upon any other work in the same language, I saw the absolute necessity of appealing to reason as the ultimate judge of the meaning of revelation, because it is impossible there can be any other. To discard reason in order to be directed by revelation in the business of religion, has long appeared to me a course equally hopeful, as to pluck out our eyes in order that we may be

directed by the sun in the business of this world. I need not say, that a course such as I have long pursued, and am still pursuing, has led me to conclusions very different indeed from those in which I was educated; and, upon many of the leading doctrines of Christianity, very different from those which are held by any class of Christians with which I am acquainted. I must, however, add, that these conclusions have been of the greatest advantage to myself. They have uniformly tended to free the Scripture from the only objections which have been brought against its truth; to enhance the value and importance of revelation; to display the religion of Moses, and the religion of Christ, as worthy to command the assent of every understanding, and engage the affection of every heart; and to give to their precepts, their promises, and their threatenings, a commanding influence, which upon any other interpretation they did not possess." \*

If any who peruse this work should wonder that the Author continued to adhere to a church, the confession of whose faith was so different from his own, let him be informed, that our Author did indeed contemplate his removal from the Establishment of his native country, as a sacrifice which was due from him to the Author of Truth, and one which, it is believed, if Providence had been pleased to spare his useful life, he would have cheerfully, however painfully, made. It is much to be regretted that he was not enabled, as he

\* As the letter from which the above extract is made, together with two others from Mr. Nicol, which appeared in the Monthly Repository, October and December 1822, and February 1823, are in some measure connected with the subject of the following work, and are highly illustrative of the character and state of mind of the writer, it has been deemed desirable to give them entire at the end of this Biographical Introduction.—EDITOR.

purposed, to superintend the publication of his valuable treatises on “Adam’s Apostacy;” “The Existence and Nature of the Devil;” “On Faith;” “On Justification;” and “On the Unity of God, in which the Doctrine of the Trinity is considered, and proved to be equally contrary to Reason and Scripture.” The four former treatises are, however, left by him in a finished state, and ready for publication; the last, on which he was engaged till within a very few days of his death, is so nearly completed, displays so much ingenious and patient research, and may be deemed as giving the last thoughts of a laborious student of the Scriptures, that it is confidently hoped the following work, one of our Author’s earliest performances, may be so favourably received as to justify the Publisher in laying it also before a candid and discerning Public.

The Rev. JAMES NICOL was born at Inverleithen, in the county of Peebles, on the 28th September, in the year 1769. His childhood and youth were spent in the obscurity of his native village.\* From the confined means which his parents possessed, the son was brought up to a mechanical occupation, in which he was employed for several years; not, however, to the neglect of that mental cultivation which is frequently, and remarkably in the present instance, car-

\* It may be interesting to the lovers of sacred literature to be informed, that Inverleithen is situated in the immediate vicinity, and within sight, of the venerable mansion of Lord Traquair, in which the celebrated Goddes spent some time as domestic chaplain. See his Life, by Mason Good.



ried on in spite of the most adverse circumstances. When his attention was turned towards the ministry, he acquired the rudiments of the Latin tongue from Mr. Tate, the schoolmaster of the village; and after a short period of preparation, during which his progress appears to have been very rapid, he was matriculated as a student in the University of Edinburgh, where he had as fellow-students and intimate companions, many gentlemen who have since acquired great reputation for their literary productions. From one of these,\* the writer of this Introduction has great pleasure in being permitted to subjoin a generous and satisfactory testimony to his general character and attainments, the value of which, it is conceived, is not diminished by the conscientious limitation which this early and long-esteemed friend of Mr. Nicol's thinks proper to make in the concluding sentence:

“ The late Mr. Nicol, Minister of Traquair, was for many years one of my most intimate friends; and besides much personal intercourse when we were fellow-students in Edinburgh, I enjoyed, during a long period, the pleasure of his confidential correspondence. His natural talents were of the first order; and his attainments, under great disadvantages, were very distinguished. He was an excellent classical scholar, and thoroughly skilled in the Hebrew language. He was well acquainted with polite literature in general, but applied his mind principally to history and theology. He was remarkably studious in his habits, and capable of extraordinary application. His memory was peculiarly ready

\* The Rev. James Brewster, Minister of Craig, near Montrose, author of a volume of excellent Lectures on our Lord's Sermon on the Mount.

and attentive. He was irreproachable and exemplary in his morals, amiable and cheerful in his temper, kindly and affectionate in his dispositions. He was a delightful companion, and a steady friend. His sentiments in regard to the doctrines of Revealed Religion, were, in early life, strictly Calvinistic; and I derived much assistance from his more mature judgment and experience, in forming my own views of these important subjects. But I regretted deeply, in common with many of his friends, that he afterwards indulged in speculations inconsistent, in our opinion, with the doctrines of the Church of Scotland, and unprofitable for spiritual edification or comfort; and which, I have reason to fear, tended greatly to cast a shade over his many excellencies, and to obstruct his usefulness as a Minister of the Gospel."

The following sentences are extracted from an article which appeared in "The Caledonian Mercury," soon after Mr. Nicol's death, and which is understood to have been written by one who had nearer, and therefore better, opportunities of observing the actual effects of our Author's ministrations, than the friend from whose obliging communication the last paragraph is taken:

"Great as were his intellectual endowments and acquirements, they were far surpassed by the virtues of his life and the qualities of his heart. An open and generous frankness, a kind and condescending deportment, combined with the most inflexible integrity and unconquerable candour, threw over his whole character a moral loveliness which the most superficial observer felt and acknowledged. He was a stranger to the house of mirth, but a familiar friend in all the scenes of poverty and woe that were around him. In imitation of his Divine Master, 'he went about doing good.'

And though he stood prominently forward as the benevolent friend of the friendless, yet the more copious streams of his beneficence, by which he so often visited and refreshed the heart of the faint and the miserable, flowed in silence, and in secret channels. A deep concern for the future and higher destinies of our nature, was closely entwined round his heart, and in his public capacity he laboured hard to inspire his hearers with the love of God and goodness. And over the bed of the dying, he mingled the kindest sympathies of the heart with the rich consolations of the Gospel of Peace, which are so well fitted to calm the restless anxieties of the hoping, yet wavering spirit, in that dread and darkest hour of human trial. In the circle of his family and friends, his every word and action revealed those kind and hallowed affections of the heart from which they sprung."

Mr. Nicol was, during the latter part of his University education, (about A. D. 1797 and 1798,) himself a tutor in the family of Mr. Borthwick, of Crookstone, in Berwickshire; and nearly a year, in 1799, he taught the present Archibald Farquharson, Esq., of Finzean, in Kincardineshire. In 1802, he was called to the ministerial charge of the parish of Traquair. He became connected in marriage with the sister of his predecessor. By this lady he had six children, the eldest of whom, a very promising boy, on whom his father's hopes were fixed, preceded him in his removal to another world: two sons, and three daughters, still continue to experience a mother's tenderness and care, and to be animated by the contemplation of their father's talents and virtues.

Mr. Nicol was a contributor of a number of short

articles to the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, conducted by Dr. Brewster, among which are, Baptism, Baptistry, Baptists, Bithynia, Cranmer, and others, known by the signature of (N). In the year 1805, he published two small volumes of "Poems, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect," which were favourably received, and have been highly commended by competent judges.

Our Author died on the 5th November, 1819.

B. M.

*Glasgow, October, 1823.*

## LETTERS TO THE REV. B. MARDON.

### LETTER I.

*Traquair Manse, Sept. 3, 1818.*

MY DEAR SIR,

Your favour of the 16th of August reached me in course of post, and if I had not been precluded by circumstances, which it is needless to mention, I would have answered it immediately. \* \* \* \* \* Though the greater number of letter-writers find no subject more agreeable for filling a page with than themselves, yet for the most part no subject is more insipid to their correspondents. I cannot, however, refrain from saying, that the account which you have received of my sentiments is true. Ever since I directed my studies to Theology, I not only considered it to be an imperious duty, but I found it to be an exalted enjoyment, to bend the whole powers of my mind, fearlessly, but with reverence, to the investigation of Scripture; and convinced that the Scriptures must be interpreted by the same rules which are legitimate upon any other work in the same language, I saw the absolute necessity of appealing to reason as the ultimate judge of the meaning of revelation, because it is impossible there can be any other. To discard reason in order to be directed by

revelation in the business of religion, has long appeared to me to be a course equally hopeful, as to pluck out our eyes in order that we may be directed by the sun in the business of this world. I need not say, that a conduct such as I have long pursued, and am still pursuing, has led me to conclusions very different indeed from those in which I was educated; and, upon many of the leading doctrines of Christianity, very different from those which are held by any class of Christians with which I am acquainted. I must, however, add, that these conclusions have been of the greatest advantage to myself. They have uniformly tended to free the Scripture from the only objections which have been brought against its truth; to enhance the value and importance of revelation; to display the religion of Moses, and the religion of Christ, as worthy to command the assent of every understanding, and engage the affection of every heart; and to give to their precepts, their promises, and their threatenings, a commanding influence, which upon any other interpretation they did not possess.

It gives me great pleasure to understand from you, that your success in Glasgow is equal to what you could expect. Indeed, I am convinced that the great point is gained when mankind are brought to listen; for Truth is so adapted to gratify every desire of a rational being, that whenever she is allowed a patient hearing, she is almost sure of gaining her cause. In this respect, the whole country, at least in this neighbourhood, has undergone a wonderful change for the better. Opinions which not long ago would have been heard with horror as blasphemy, are now the subject of fair discussion amongst many; and it was only yesterday when I happened to go into the house of a tradesman in my parish, whose wife has been long in a bad state of health, that I found him spending the few minutes of relaxation which his dinner-hour allowed him, in reading the "Vindication" of your predecessor. Though a man on the borders of seventy, his opinions have been completely changed within the last ten years; and though his conduct upon that occasion, therefore, was what I had reason to expect, yet I must confess that I was not a little surprised when he told me that he had received the book from another man of equal age with himself, who, though a constant hearer of mine, I did not at all suspect as engaged in such speculations. "When such things," to alter our Saviour's expression, "are done in the *dry tree*, what will be done in the *green*?"

Though I have not the least doubt of the ultimate triumph of

Truth, yet I must confess that I have often sincerely lamented that her friends have sometimes thought themselves called upon to admit principles which I am convinced her cause did not require, and which have given too much advantage to her enemies. Amongst them I am forced to reckon Dr. Priestley. Never man, perhaps, entered upon the investigation of truth with greater ardour, or with a more sincere wish to advance her interests; but I must regret that he thought it necessary in order to defend his opinions, to speak so *doubtfully*, at least, as he did speak, of the inspiration of Scripture, and especially of the justness of St. Paul's reasonings. Will you believe me when I say, that were I to attempt to level the whole fabric of superstition in the dust, I would draw my strongest arguments from St. Paul's writings, and what is more, from his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, which have been the strong bulwarks of Orthodoxy? I am happy to say, however, that Mr. Yates, and many other Unitarians, are illustrious examples of a conduct very different. Indeed, I am convinced that when once the Scriptures are properly understood, the friends of truth will find them in every instance perfectly consistent with reason and common sense.

I am not ignorant that no man has a right to set up his own opinions as a standard for others, nor to suppose that circumstances which press strongly upon his own mind, will have the same weight upon the minds of all; yet, if it were allowed us to judge from our own feelings, I would not hesitate to assert that the great hindrance to the complete reception of truth, is *the seeming foundation* which those opinions which are called the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, have in the language of Scripture. Notwithstanding all that learning and abilities have done—and they have done much—yet I must confess that no explanation of *Original Sin*, which throws its baneful shade over the wide surface of revelation, has yet been given which divests that subject of absurdity and contradiction, or which in a satisfactory manner explains all the phenomena of the word of God. Even Taylor's hypothesis, though in many respects a work of extraordinary merit, appears to me to labour under insuperable difficulties. I am convinced, that if ever that subject be properly elucidated—and I think it may be elucidated—the abettors of revelation will be able not merely to defend it as a doctrine that *may be* reconciled with reason and common sense, but to bring it forward as a strong proof of Scripture itself. The same observations are applicable to the *Atonement*. Till a more rational account than any which we

have of the Jewish economy, and especially of sacrifices, is given, I fear much that the orthodox doctrine of the *Atonement*, notwithstanding all its absurdity, will maintain its ground. Nay, what is more, I suspect much the Arminian statement of *Justification* is almost as absurd, though certainly not so dangerous to morality, as the orthodox statements; and will you pardon me when I say, that the account which the Unitarians give of that doctrine, in some scattered notices subjoined to their excellent translation of the New Testament, tends not to throw much light upon the subject?

I confess it is much easier to shew the weakness of another's system, than to establish a better, or rather to establish another altogether free from objections; and hence, I imagine, that whilst the orthodox doctrines have been repeatedly proved to be altogether untenable, the real doctrines of Scripture, except the unity of God, have not yet been exhibited in all their native beauty and majesty. You will, perhaps, impute all this to vanity—if you do, I will not say, that in your present circumstances you have great reason to impute it to any thing else. But when you know me better, which I hope will soon be the case, I trust you will find that, as Pope somewhere says, “I am too proud to be vain.” At the commencement of a correspondence, and will you allow me to say, of a friendship, from which I expect both pleasure and advantage, I wish you to bear in mind, that when I speak, as I have now done, of *the state* of religious knowledge, I must be understood as speaking of it as it is known to me. Many illustrations may have been given of the different doctrines which I mentioned above, which I have not seen, and hence many of the objections which I could bring against those which I have seen, may have been already fully obviated. For instance, I have never seen “*The Monthly Repository*,” and hence I must be ignorant of many things it contains. I design, however, to avail myself of it from your recommendation. \* \* \* \* \* [Dr.] Southwood Smith, I only know from his Reply to Thomson\*—a performance which did him infinite honour.

I hope to have the pleasure of meeting with you some time; and should that happen, we could say more in an hour than we can write in an age. Are you never in this part of the world? Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to see you at Traquair Manse. As it is, you can write, and I expect to hear from you soon,

\* The Editor of the Christian Instructor.

and to receive all the information which I know you can give respecting the advancement of "pure and undefiled religion" in the world. \* \* \*.

I was sorry that the \*Turnbells found it necessary to leave Scotland.\* "The little leaven might have leavened a great lump;" but there is no help for it, and we oftentimes cannot be certain what is best. Of one thing, however, I am certain, that I am,

My dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

JAMES NICOL.

## LETTER II.

*Traquair Manse, May 5, 1819.*

MY DEAR SIR,

You are by no means to suppose that I deem this meagre scrawl, for such I fear it will prove, any equivalent for your friendly letter which I received some months ago.

When I tell you that I am writing this in bed, propped upon my elbow, you will believe me, when I assure you, that the sole design of my writing, at this time, is to inform you that I am "still in the land of the living;" that though I have long been silent, yet my heart is not dead to friendship; and that though I may seem to have forgot the friends of truth and of religion, yet I have never ceased to rejoice in their joy; and the very love of the dearest interests of religion has given you the grounds of suspecting my attachment, which I fear may have taken place. Instead, therefore, of entering into any disquisition on the interesting topics of your last communication, for which I feel myself at present altogether unequal, I design to give you a sketch of my history, which will include my apology, and, at the same time, if such is the will of Providence, it may also prove to be "the last speech, confession, and dying words" of your friend.

For many years I have been much subject to a stomach and bowel complaint, which, though not so severe as to preclude me from performing the duties of my situation, has scarcely left me a week of uninterrupted good health. You may easily conceive that this *radical*

\* For the United States.



defect in my constitution—for such from early recollections I am convinced is its real character—has not been removed by the process of time ; on the contrary, every year has rather increased it ; and though the use of medicine, to which I am obliged daily to have recourse, has enabled me to enjoy a good deal of happiness in literary pursuits, and in the society of my friends and family, yet still, upon the whole, I have been making it worse. In consequence of this, immediately after I received your last letter, a young gentleman in Edinburgh, who has long been a particular friend of mine, and is one of my heritors, insisted that I would come to town for medical advice, offered me every accommodation in his father's family during my stay, and with his wonted generosity, sent out his father's carriage to convey me to the metropolis. I need not say that I accepted his kind invitation ; that I carried your letter to Edinburgh in order to answer it during my abode there ; and that, as my other studies were to be broken off for two weeks, at least, I sincerely resolved to pay all my literary debts, and yours among the rest. But what is man ! Notwithstanding all my virtuous resolutions, matters turned out in Edinburgh very differently from what I expected. Uncasy, and even sick with medicine, unable almost to command a single hour from the attention and solicitude of my friends, and hoping that every succeeding day would prove more propitious to thought than the present, the whole two weeks that I remained in Edinburgh passed away without my ever putting pen to paper, and I returned home improved in my health, but quite dissatisfied with the manner in which my time was allowed to slip away. All this may do very well ; but how has the long interval been filled up from your return to the present day ? To shew this, I must go backwards a little. I have been busily employed for several years in elucidating some of the peculiar doctrines of revelation ; and in giving a view of them which appeared to me not only entirely new, but, as far as I can judge, much more *rational*, and I must add, much more *scriptural*, than any with which I am acquainted. I was engaged with Original Sin at the time when Wardlaw's "*Unitarianism Incapable*," &c. fell into my hands. I must state that the doctrine of *the Trinity* was not included in the plan which I had chalked out for myself.

My reason for leaving it out was, not because I did not deem it of the very first importance, but because I despaired of throwing any new light upon the subject, and because the other doctrines which I fondly persuaded myself I could exhibit in a light that would make them perfectly irresistible, would, in all probability,

occupy all that remained of a life not *very good at the best*, and certainly at that particular period rather precarious. But in reading over Wardlaw, I could not help observing, that all that had been done in defence of the primary principles of all religion, whether natural or revealed, was so very far from silencing the orthodox, that they only seemed to gather fresh courage from every attack made upon them; and, half in jest and half in earnest, I began to fill the margin of his volume with notes as I went along, which might serve as *memoranda*, if ever I should think of turning my attention to that subject. As the margin soon was crowded, I had recourse to separate slips of paper, and many of my notes I wrote more fully out afterwards at by-hours, if you will excuse the expression. At the period of my return from Edinburgh, therefore, I had a large mass of observations, of explanations of texts and of expositions of sophisms which were employed by the orthodox, all lying by me. I need not add, that in the course of composition, many arguments for the Unity of God, which I had not met with; many new elucidations of texts, which are generally brought forward by both parties, occurred to me; and even upon this subject I began to flatter myself that I might do something for the interests of religion. My papers, however, though valuable to myself, I well knew, could be of no value to any other person, from the detached manner in which they were written; and as I had then completed *Original Sin*, I set to the copying and extending and forming into a *whole* the insulated materials I had by me, and in a short time I got so immersed in the investigation, that I lost sight of every thing else; and wishing, with the greatest enthusiasm, to add one labour more to what I had done, I brought on myself a return of my former complaint, which my journey to Edinburgh had a little mitigated; and as I have not been able for many years to sit at my desk when writing, from a pain at my breast, I was under the necessity of standing; and the constant standing about three weeks ago brought on a swelling and inflammation in both my limbs, which has confined me to bed, and put a stop to all my operations. I am, however, getting fast better; any degree of fever which I had is gone, and I hope in a few days to resume, with more caution, my labours. This, then, is the real state of the matter. I could not think of writing to you without entering at some length into the subject of yours. I could not do that without spending a day or two upon it; and a day or two, in the way in which I felt my mind, seemed an age, as it might probably hinder me from finishing my Essay; for the state

of my health is far from being good ; and I hoped, by telling you the truth, and shewing you the *effects* of my silence, to obtain your forgiveness. I have now, however, been brought to a sense of my duty ; I have made a confession of what I otherwise would, perhaps, not have done, and I wait with some hope of your pardon \*\*\*\*\*.

You must write me soon, notwithstanding my delinquency. I will prove a better child for the time to come. Send me all the news, not about trade and manufactures, but about something else, which is of infinitely more importance, the success of truth and true religion. Am I never to see you ? \*\*\*\*\*.

I must conclude, then, by assuring you that I am,

My dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

JAMES NICOL.

### LETTER III.

*Traquair Manse, Sept. 28, 1819.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I dare say you will now be concluding that my friendship is nothing but a pretence, and that the letters you receive from me, are nothing but words of course, designed to amuse you, and to while away an insipid hour. Were I called to refute this idea, I am not sure that I could bring any proof which would at all serve that purpose to any person, and yet, you may believe me, the idea would be totally unfounded. Various causes have had considerable influence, not only in effecting it, but even in excusing my silence to myself. From your last letter, I anticipated the pleasure of seeing you at Traquair Manse long before this, and of receiving more information from you in a single day, than a correspondence by writing could convey in a year ; and I have always found, too, that what is thrown out in a moment of social intercourse, possesses a freshness and a raciness, if I may use these terms, which nothing that distils coldly from the pen can ever possess. I have, likewise, as I formerly told you, unhappily for myself, though, perhaps, very happily for my correspondents, plunged headlong into the gulf of polemical theology, without much prospect of ever getting out of

that "bottomless pit," which the orthodox, in the restless blindness of their understanding, if the understanding had any hand in it, have dug for their opponents. Need I mention, too, that this is actually my birth-day, when I enter upon my fiftieth year, with a constitution never robust; but now, worn out with every thing but grief and dissipation; and though I have already forced my way through many an intricate labyrinth, yet a weary distance still awaits me, and my growing infirmities, while they render me less able for exertion, are continually calling upon me to quicken my pace. I do not know if I mentioned it before, but the truth is, that owing to these circumstances, and the love which I have to the cause, which I believe a good one, my conscience constantly upbraids me, whenever I am employed in any thing but that which I mention; and though this may not vindicate, it will account for my silence, without an impeachment of the affection of my heart.

I formerly told you that I had entered upon a consideration of the doctrine of the Trinity, and that I was led to that consideration by the publication of Wardlaw's performance against Yates. From the cursory manner in which I must have mentioned this circumstance, I see from your last that you have formed an inaccurate idea of my design. My design is not to revise, and to refute in that revision, the statements and reasonings of Wardlaw, but to accomplish a still more important and arduous work, by investigating the subject in all its different aspects and bearings; and thus to refute the doctrine, rather than any particular defender of it. In the accomplishment of this design, however, you will easily see, that the assertions of Wardlaw will not be forgotten, especially as he has attempted to furbish anew the blunted weapons of his predecessors. I have endeavoured to pay particular attention, with what success it does not belong to me to say, to what may be called the metaphysical discussion of the question, whether it be possible that the orthodox doctrine can be true? My reason for doing this, is, that if it can be shewn, and I flatter myself that I have shewn, that the orthodox doctrine is by no means *a mystery*, as its abettors would have us to believe, and as many of its opponents seem to admit, but a plain and palpable contradiction, and which, therefore, cannot possibly be true; all attempts to prove it from Scripture must be in vain; for should Scripture be brought to prove it, it could not establish it, but overturn itself. The only writers, with whom I am acquainted, who, to any extent, have attempted the same thing, are Clarke and Priestley, men whose minds were of the very first order.

Though Clarke's hypothesis appears to me altogether untenable, yet I cannot but admire his clear and forcible and discriminating reasonings respecting the proper unity of the Supreme Being, and wish that men of similar abilities had pursued the path of which he had fairly taken possession. Priestley, with powers which have seldom been equalled, wanted the coolness and the patience of Clarke; and the nature of his controversy with Horsley, as well as numberless other pursuits, precluded him from doing what he otherwise would have done, upon the primary question. Had I not imagined it possible to push the inquiry still further than they have done, and to give a broader basis to the grand conclusion, that it is impossible that there can be any thing but *one God in one person*, I would not have entered the field on which the power of their sagacious and argumentative understandings was so conspicuously displayed. From this, you are by no means to suppose that I neglect, or even treat lightly, the arguments which both parties draw from Scripture in support of their respective doctrines. I have considered every text that deserves notice, and if I do not deceive myself, I have brought forward something new upon most if not upon all. I cannot but add, that I have just now finished a section upon *Eternal Generation*, some part of which I once thought of sending to you with this, in which I have come to a conclusion, which you may think perhaps a paradox, if not a contradiction, that though God must of necessity have possessed the *power of acting* from eternity, yet still it is absolutely impossible, that any *act or exertion* of that power, whether *necessary* or *contingent*, can be eternal—a conclusion which is not only contrary to what all the orthodox *must* admit, but to what many of their opponents positively assert. Price, whom on account of his amiable disposition and superior abilities, notwithstanding his opinions are different from mine, I can admire and love, says in one of his sermons, "It is *self-evident*, that the Almighty Being, who existed from eternity, *might have exerted his power from eternity*." Now, though this is the decision of no mean mind, yet I think that I could legitimately prove, that it is absolutely impossible that any of the Almighty's *acts or exertions* can be *eternal*, in the proper sense of that term. In short, upon Price's principle, I do not see how it would be possible to disprove the eternal generation of the Son. But enough of Metaphysics.

I received your kind present with pleasure, and return you my sincere thanks. The extracts from Dr. [Southwood] Smith were not new to me, as I am in possession of his masterly performance.

\* The pamphlet of your friend is excellent; \* and I am sorry that such a person should leave the country, as he must have done much good had he remained among you. The argument which he chiefly employs, and which he presses home upon *old orthodox*, with equal force and skill, has not often been alluded to. Indeed, that Christianity should be so much corrupted, as the Scriptures affirm it would be, in the dark ages, is a fact altogether unaccountable, upon the supposition of the truth of the common doctrines. Upon that supposition the corruption would be really nothing; for the Popish doctrines of Original Sin, the Trinity, the Atonement—all the primary doctrines, in short, are the same as those of the Protestant; and hence the primary doctrines of Christianity would have remained free from corruption, and all that ignorance and superstition would have done, would be only that of adding a few senseless articles to them, without blending them. The corruption of which the apostles speak was not of this kind—it was to enter into the very vitals of every article which Christ taught. Upon the receipt of your letter, I sent to Edinburgh for your Sermon,† which I perused with great pleasure; and must confess, that the allusions which you make to the English Liturgy did not appear to me so foreign from our mode of worship as you suppose. The truth is, though we have no set forms of prayer, yet the expressions employed in the English forms, are so similar to the expressions employed by the Scottish clergy, that your argument seemed to me to suffer nothing, from your appeal to examples taken from the English Prayer-Book. I must tell you, however, that I was disappointed in your passing over so slightly, those passages of Scripture to which the orthodox appeal as instances of prayer addressed to Christ. But when I say so, I am convinced that you could not have elucidated these, without a good deal of verbal criticism, which would have been altogether inadmissible in a popular discourse. Hence you will see that my disappointment had its origin, not in your neglecting to do what you ought to have done, but in *my wish* that you had done what did not properly lie in your way. You merely state that the phrase “calling upon the name of Christ,” which the orthodox bring forward so obtrusively, upon every occasion, is a false translation, and

\* The Layman's Letter to the Protestant, (see Mon. Repos. XIV. 441,) the author of which soon afterwards removed to Gibraltar.

† The Father of Jesus, the Christian's God, or the Doctrine of Scripture concerning the Object of Religious Worship contrasted with prevalent Forms of Prayer.

that it is capable of another version. I am convinced that this is the case ; but I am not sure that the Greek will bear the translation which the Unitarians generally give it. I think an intimate acquaintance with the use of the phrase in the New Testament, and with the circumstances in which the persons who are said to call on Christ were placed, and what is more, with the Greek of the Septuagint, might lead us to a translation, not only more just than either of the two generally adopted by the two parties, but perfectly free from giving the least handle to the orthodox doctrine. To explain the subject, however, is not the work of a letter. \* \* \* With kindest wishes for you, and the most ardent desire for the cause of truth,

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours most affectionately,

JAMES NICOL.

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# AN ESSAY ON SACRIFICE,

&c.

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## SECTION I.

### *Of the Institution and Nature of Sacrifice in General.*

THOUGH there is perhaps no subject connected with our holy religion which has employed the learning and ingenuity of men more than Sacrifice, yet there is perhaps no subject which is still involved in greater obscurity, and upon which the minds of men are more divided. The reason why the descriptions which have been given of this stupendous edifice are always imperfect, and oftentimes false, may perhaps be found in the conduct of theologists, who, instead of seeking information by surveying minutely its internal structure, have either viewed it from a distance, or have approached only to a few of its prominent parts. But even before parts can be described with accuracy, and their relations and dependencies properly ascertained, it is necessary not only to “walk about Zion, and to tell the towers thereof,” but to enter the gates of that venerable temple, to explore its sacred recesses, and, by holding communication with the awful Power who resides there, to learn the connexion of its various apartments, and the design and import of its holy ministrations.

The reader is by no means to imagine that I have



the vanity to hope that what is now to be offered upon this interesting subject will illumine what is dark, or correct what is deformed in the writings of others: but if I can contribute any thing to the accomplishment of these important purposes; or if there be any reward for those who sincerely and ardently endeavour to accomplish them, my labour will not be vain. One thing is certain, that whatever opinion we form respecting the end and import of sacrifices, it ought to be consistent with the perfections of God to whom they were offered, and with the nature and circumstances of man who was commanded to offer them. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that as the subject, from the number of sacrifices which were enjoined, as well as from the number of ceremonies which attended this immolation, is extensive and intricate, it is, but just to demand that the interpretation given should be applicable, not to a part, but to the whole; not to one sacrifice only, but to all the sacrifices which were appointed.

It is not my intention—because it does not appear to be of much importance—to enter particularly into the controversy which has long been agitated, whether sacrifices were at first appointed by God, or were a human invention, which the Almighty was afterward pleased to sanction. Hid as the question is in the darkness of the most remote antiquity, and silent as the Scriptures are respecting it, it would be folly to expect that the reasonings on either side, which must of necessity be hypothetical, will ever silence the objections on the other. But whilst the antiquity of their origin precludes the possibility of positive infor-

mation, and is therefore hostile to the complete elucidation of the subject, it is calculated, I apprehend, to throw as much circumstantial evidence into the scale of their divine origin, as may satisfy every candid mind.

The exact period when Abel and Cain offered their sacrifices, it may be impossible to ascertain: but a very few years must have elapsed from the creation of the world to that event. The time, therefore, in which human invention could have been exerted, must have been short; the number of individuals upon the earth must have been small; the circumstances which could have roused invention must have been few; and the employments which must have occupied their attention to supply their wants, must have been many and laborious. From the manner, too, in which the sacrifices of Cain and Abel are mentioned, a person, I imagine, may perceive that these were not the first. Not only is there no hint given that they were a novel invention, but the original words which our translators have rendered "in process of time," indicate, not obscurely, as may be observed from the version on the margin [at the end of the days], that it was the fixed period formerly appointed for that solemn service. The temper and conduct of the offerers likewise, are described in such a manner as to lead me to conclude that their minds were familiarized to the practice, and that, from former experience, they expected the Being to whom they sacrificed would testify his acceptance of their oblations. As a probable conjecture, too—for I give it no higher name—I have sometimes thought, that Cain, before he had divested himself of those moral and religious principles which in early years warm and animate every heart;

“ before the powers of his soul were enslaved by vice,” or the repetition of wickedness had hardened his mind so as to prepare him for the murder of his brother : must have received that attestation of divine favour which was now denied him. This, and this only, will fully account for the evident disappointment which he felt, and which prompted his revenge against his brother. The common supposition, too, which I think highly probable, that that attestation was given by fire descending from heaven, or imparted by the Shechinah, to consume the sacrifice, will account for the conviction which Cain had, that the burning of Abel’s sacrifice was a mark of divine regard, as it would have been possible to have given it an opposite character if custom had not fixed its import. The same circumstance will account for the conduct of the brothers in offering sacrifices without putting fire under them, which they seem to have done, but which it is probable they would not have done, had they not expected a divine interposition. It will likewise account for the expostulation which God afterwards addressed to Cain : “ If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted ? ”—that is, from the tokens of divine regard which thou already hast received, when thy temper and conduct were good, thou mayest rest assured that if such had been still thy temper and conduct, God would have continued to signify his acceptance of thy offering.

But what appears to have more weight, is, the manner in which the Almighty was pleased to watch over his new-born offspring, and to lead them to the knowledge and the imitation of himself. We are certain that when God created our first parents, he, though

not personally, yet by some visible symbol, appeared to them daily, and familiarly communicated his instructions as a man doth to his friend. Their situation and circumstances, as I will afterwards prove, imperiously demanded this. Destitute of the experience of former ages; unassisted by art, and uninformed by science; unaccustomed even to the use of language, which appears necessary, not only to communicate thought, but even to the exercise of thinking; unqualified for abstract speculation, or for arriving at general conclusions by long and patient induction;—the children to whom God had given birth must at least have been miserable, if not have perished, if their Father had not watched over their infancy, and conducted them by the hand at almost every step. That this intercourse between man and his Maker continued to the time which we are now contemplating, is certain. The conference which God had with Cain after the murder of his brother, is nothing but a continuation of the same familiar intercourse; and that it was not then renewed, after it had been suspended, is evident from the words of Cain: “Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid: and I shall be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth.” Nothing, I apprehend, can be meant by his being hid from the face of God, but his being driven from the place where the Shechinah, the visible symbol of the Divine presence, resided, and from the midst of which the Almighty had from the beginning delivered his will to man.

To suppose that men, during the period that this familiar intercourse subsisted, introduced external cere-

monies into the worship of God, without his appointment, is, I apprehend, what the circumstances of the case will not allow. I say external ceremonies, because I can perceive a difference in will-worship, to use the apposite phrase of the apostle, when it terminates in practice, and when it terminates in speculation. External ceremonies have, if I may be allowed the expression, the properties of matter, are open to the senses, and cannot be introduced without drawing the attention and rousing the opposition of every pious mind. But errors of a speculative nature partake of the properties of mind, are neither visible nor tangible, and hence, by imperceptible gradations, insinuate themselves into the heart. The latter may be supposed much more easily to corrupt the principles of religion, than the former the practice of it. And I suspect that the history of religion will confirm this opinion, and prove that errors in principle not only precede and produce errors in practice, as the fountain sends forth the stream, but that errors in speculation must have taken deep root in the mind, must have acquired considerable strength, before they have the boldness to appear in practice—before they throw off shame in the presence of men, and fear in the presence of God.

I beg leave to add, though it is not absolutely necessary, that the same reason which makes errors in speculation precede errors in practice, makes men abandon errors in practice much sooner than errors in speculation. External ceremonies, when they have no foundation in scripture, are perceived as soon as men allow themselves to think, because they continually force themselves upon the senses; but errors in specu-

lation, from their very nature, make no impression upon the senses, and hence for a long time elude the grasp even of the most acute understanding. The history of the Reformation, if contemplated by a philosophic mind, would, I apprehend, supply ample illustration of this observation.

But to return: I remark, that upon the supposition of the human origin of sacrifices, external ceremonies were introduced into religion without the appointment of God, not by the careless and wicked, who, it may be supposed, might have recourse to their own inventions as a substitute for moral righteousness, and as means to silence the accusations of conscience, but by the righteous and the good. Now, it is not to be imagined that the moral and pious mind of Abel would introduce into the service of God a human invention—an invention, too, which does not appear to lie so open and obvious as some suppose—without receiving authority from the Object of worship, with whom he had daily intercourse. The sentiments of reverence and fear, which must have animated his heart in the presence of God, would have made such conduct unnatural; and had the sacrifice in question been the first, which, without any divine warrant, he had offered, the fire from God which consumed it, might, as has been already hinted, have been looked upon as a mark of divine anger at his daring rashness, rather than an unequivocal token of divine regard.

When we consider, therefore, that God at this time, and in a public manner, testified his acceptance of the homage which was paid to him, we have, I imagine, as much, if not more evidence than is necessary to

incline us to adopt the opinion of the divine origin of sacrifice. This supposition, I apprehend, explains all the phenomena with the greatest ease, which the contrary supposition does not. Indeed, I suspect that the writers who have adopted this latter supposition, have been, in some measure at least, induced to do so from a suspicion—a suspicion altogether unfounded—that this institution was not altogether worthy of divine appointment, and from their not being able to give a rational account of its import and design. Should it appear admirably adapted to the state and circumstances of man; calculated in the best manner to promote moral righteousness; and fitted to display, not merely the condescension, but the wisdom and rectitude of the Supreme Being; all such suspicions, as well as the controversy which they have occasioned, would for ever be at rest.

These remarks, it may be necessary to state, are not designed to exhaust all the evidence upon this subject, which of late has been accumulated to a great amount, and which, by including many topics, not very relevant, to say the least of them, has rather buried than illustrated the point in question. Indeed, what is here offered is as much the result of my feelings as of reasoning; and as most of these observations appear to have escaped the notice of those who have adopted the same opinion, I designed that they should rather be a vehicle of communicating my sentiments upon the subject, than a formal proof of them.

Leaving this, then, as a subject not of primary importance, I would observe, that whatever doubts may be entertained, even by those who acknowledge the

authority of Scripture, respecting the divine origin of sacrifices, none can be entertained respecting their early adoption into the worship of God. Not only did they compose a part of the religious service which he accepted from our first parents, and their descendants, to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, but by his express injunction they composed a prominent part of the worship which the Jews were afterwards to address to him ; and hence they must have been worthy of the approbation of God, and advantageous to the improvement of man. From the false and absurd opinions which have been generally entertained concerning their import, the former of these conclusions has been denied : and from the abuse which the Jews made of them, the latter likewise has been called in question. To vindicate the conduct of God in their appointment, however, nothing appears necessary but to form a proper opinion of the end which they were designed to accomplish, and of the character of the people for whom they were instituted.

It will be universally allowed, that as external ceremonies can be appointed only as means for accomplishing a nobler end, the institution of sacrifices must stand or fall according to its fitness or unfitness for accomplishing it. But the means which may be admirably adapted for this purpose in some circumstances, may be altogether improper in others. Hence the wisdom and goodness of God will appear, not in adhering invariably to the same means of moral and religious instruction ; but in modifying and changing these as the state and circumstances of men change. It is a truth, therefore, of the very first importance ; a



truth which ought constantly, in inquiries of this kind, to be kept in view ; and a truth to which, in a particular manner, I would solicit the reader's attention, That the end to be accomplished by religion must be eternally and immutably the same ; but that the means which may be proper for accomplishing this end must be different in different circumstances. From not attending to this circumstance, more than from any other, the design of sacrifices has been misrepresented by the friends of religion ; and its adaptation to promote the moral perfection of man, questioned by its enemies. The end, then, of all religion, in all the variety of circumstances in which man can be placed, is to conduct him to the love and possession of that knowledge, purity, and righteousness, which assimilate him to the image of his Maker ; which render him the proper object of divine goodness and mercy in this world ; and prepare him for immortal felicity in the world to come.—It remains now to be proved, that sacrifices were the very best means which could be adopted for accomplishing that end, in the particular state and circumstances of the ancient world.

To conduct to the love and possession of moral excellence, creatures such as we are, endowed with a certain portion of power to act, and of freedom to direct their actions, two things appear indispensably necessary—that they know the law which they are to obey ; and that they believe it to be their duty and interest to obey it. These are the great and important doctrines which the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews inculcates, Heb. xi. 6, when he declares, “ That he who cometh to God, must believe that he

exists, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him." The goodness of our Creator has provided for the first, by writing his law upon our heart; and for the second, by forming our minds capable of assenting to its truth and obligation.

Nothing, I apprehend, is more certain then, than that the great duties of morality, whose knowledge is impressed upon the heart of man by the finger of God, and whose obligation is, in the same manner, interwoven with the primary principles of his nature, are eternally and immutably the same; independent at least of all created existence. From this it necessarily follows, that this law is perfect in itself, that it comprehends all righteousness, and extends to every state and circumstance in which man can be placed. Hence no subsequent revelation from God can ever enjoin any thing that is derogatory to its authority; any thing which adds to, or diminishes from, its precepts. From this, it by no means follows, that to creatures whose minds are naturally ignorant and weak, or who by neglect or wickedness have darkened the eyes of their understandings, a revelation from God, to illustrate what is obscurely known, or to reveal what is entirely hid from them, may not be absolutely necessary. All that follows from it is, that these precepts, as soon as they are illustrated or revealed, are recognized, by every mind capable of comprehending them, to be original branches of the immutable law of rectitude; to rest upon the same foundation; and to be obligatory from the same authority. That any system of revealed religion, therefore, should, in the smallest manner, alter or supersede "one of the

least of these commandments," is so far from being true, that all which revealed religion can do, is to take for granted this original law, and make it the foundation upon which it builds its own doctrines. If, therefore, from the ignorance and wickedness of men, any thing which contradicts, or supersedes, or adds to, this natural and primary law, be blended with it, it must in time be overturned; because it can only maintain its ground by the ignorance and wickedness which introduced it, and which God in time has doomed to destruction. The Mosaic and Christian dispensations, however, have nothing to fear from these principles, however just may be the fears of those, who blend with them the commandments of men, or deem it necessary to defend them after they have been thus blended.

But we likewise said, that before man can be induced to perform this law, it is absolutely necessary that he believe it to be his duty and interest. Faith or belief, then, is the natural and the primary principle of all moral and religious conduct, without which it is impossible for man to perform a single action for which he can be rewarded. Nor will it make any difference whether the precepts which faith induces him to obey, are discovered by the light of nature, or by a revelation from God. In either case, the belief that they are obligatory upon him, and that obedience to that obligation will be conducive to his happiness, is the only means that is indispensably necessary to excite him to action. From these remarks, which appear self-evident, it follows, that man from the moment of his creation, was bound to obey the law of rectitude ;

and that faith was the principle which, by the appointment of God, and the constitution of his nature, was to lead him to that obedience. The nature of man, therefore, must be entirely changed, before these precepts cease to be obligatory upon him, and before he be led to obedience by any other principles to the exclusion of faith. Other means may be proper, nay, may be absolutely necessary, to promote the same purpose; but it is evident, that without faith, even these means could have no power; and that even with this derivative power, they must be appointed, not to supersede faith, but only to be auxiliaries to this primary and indispensable principle.

Not only must revealed religion, therefore, ultimately rest upon natural religion; but what is more, the only intention and use of the former must be to explain the dictates, and support the obligation, of the latter. From this, we are not to conclude, that this primary law, when abstractly considered, is really obscure; or that its obligation is really weak. There is no obscurity in the one, nor weakness in the other—but in us, whose understandings are oftentimes so darkened as not to perceive the truth, and whose hearts are so hardened as not to feel its obligation. All the ceremonies of revealed religion, as well as revelation itself, were appointed for these important purposes. Neither the nature of the moral law, nor the principle of faith which led man to obey it, but the state and circumstances of the ancient world rendered these ceremonies necessary; and it is upon this supposition alone that sacrifices can, and ought to be defended.

• The value of revelation and of external ceremonies,

therefore, was merely relative, and relative to the people to whom they were given. They added nothing to the law of righteousness, whose precepts are eternal and immutable; but exhibited vice and virtue more familiarly and forcibly to the minds of an ignorant and barbarous people than they were before. They added no new obligation to the law of righteousness; for it possessed before every obligation resulting from its own nature, from the will of God, and from the constitution of man; but they rendered the minds of an uncultivated age more susceptible to the impressions of that obligation. They established no new principle of obedience exclusive of faith; for faith, as it was the natural, so was it still the indispensable principle of obedience; but they, by enabling the understanding to comprehend, and the memory to remember, the nature and obligation of moral duty, administered strength and energy to faith, and supplied occasions and opportunities which incited men to yield to its influence.

As these remarks will, in some measure, inform us what sacrifices could, and what they could not, accomplish, they will serve as no improper introduction to our future investigations. In the infancy of the world, when these ceremonies were introduced, language was undoubtedly highly figurative. Of this we have sufficient proof in the history and manners of every rude and barbarous people. As their language is ever scanty, and their feelings and passions strong and impetuous, their imaginations have full play; and, not being restrained by any delicacy of taste, or refined maxims of composition, the boldest metaphors, even in common conversation, are employed; and all the

external productions of the earth, all the phenomena of nature, are put in requisition, to express the internal feelings of the heart, and give a body and a form to the abstract conceptions of the understanding. But if this be true of the original language of every rude tribe, it must be true concerning the language of man when he was first placed upon the earth. Not only must his language have been scanty—which would force him to employ the *literal* sign of one thing to express *figuratively* another; not only must his organs of enunciation have been strangers to that facility which repeated exercise only can bestow—which would induce him to have recourse to action to assist his expressions; not only must his imagination have been awakened and sublimed by the genial suns, the cloudless skies, and the enlivening scenery of an eastern climate; but as he was formed, not in the weak, the helpless—I had almost said, the unconscious, state of infancy, every thing which he perceived without him, every thing which he felt within him, must, from its novelty alone, have exercised a power over his imagination, and given a daring boldness of imagery to his language, which could never again happen to any other person.

But men, who have described the phenomena of mind, in language formed to describe the phenomena of matter; who have decorated and delineated abstract qualities by phrases which can only be applied literally to bodily qualities; will not be long restrained within these bounds. Whenever they find it necessary—and they must soon find it necessary—to communicate thought, not only to those who are present, but to those who are absent, an invention founded upon the

figurative use of language will immediately present itself. In this manner is it easy to account for the first mode of writing which men had recourse to, called hieroglyphic or symbolical ; which was nothing else, but paintings of things which are visible, as representations of the things themselves ; or as representations of other things to which they were supposed to have some analogy or resemblance. That this mode of communicating information universally prevailed in the infancy of the world, is abundantly evident from the concurrent testimony of all antiquity ; that it prevailed in America when that country was discovered by Columbus, the history of that discovery puts beyond a doubt ; and that it is practised by the natives of China at the present day, is well known.

These circumstances, in the civil condition of man, at that early and rude period, gave birth to several circumstances in revealed religion, which deserve to be mentioned in this place. The language of hieroglyphics, if I may use the expression, laid a natural foundation for the language of prophecy ; which is nothing but a scenical representation of future events exhibited to the eye of the prophet. To imagine that this language had no foundation in the manners of the times ; that the things which were employed as symbols to adumbrate other things, were chosen arbitrarily by God, or his messengers, would argue the greatest ignorance. All that God did, nay, all that God, in wisdom, could do, was to choose the mode of communicating thought which use had already sanctioned—to adopt those symbols which were already employed, when they expressed, with sufficient clearness,

the sentiments to be conveyed; and when they did not, to invent others, in consistency with the nature and genius of that mode.

Nor was this way of communicating instruction employed only in exhibiting future events to the eye of the prophet; it was extended farther, and gave rise to a practice which, at that particular period, must have been attended with the very best consequences. The practice alluded to, was to accompany verbal communications with some action, expressive of the nature of these communications; and calculated to rouse the attention, to impress the memory, and to reach, through the medium of the senses, the heart and understanding. To prove that the Scriptures abound with instances of this, I need only mention 1 Sam. xv. 27, where we are told, that as Samuel turned about to go away from Saul, he laid hold on the skirt of his mantle, and rent it, and said, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine who is better than thou." In 2 Kings xiii. 14, Elisha informs Joash, not only by language but by the symbolic action of shooting with a bow and arrows, that the Lord would give him a certain number of victories over the Syrians, and deliver him from their power. And to adduce only another instance, the Almighty, in Ezek. v. informs the Jews, by an expressive action which he particularly describes, that a third part of them should die with the famine and pestilence in the midst of the city; that a third part should fall by the sword round about; that a third part should be scattered into all ~~the~~ winds; and that a few should be preserved from



all these calamities. These, though only a few of the many instances which might be adduced, are sufficient to confirm and explain the custom, and to shew how well it must have been adapted for communicating instruction with effect to the minds of an ignorant and careless people.

As a part of the same extensive plan of moral discipline, the Almighty appears to have appointed sacrifices. The victims themselves, and the rights attending their immolation, were employed as emblems or symbols of important realities, to which they had some analogy either from nature or association; and which God endeavoured to impress deeply upon the mind, that they might regulate the conduct. But though this is acknowledged by every person who has considered the nature of sacrifices, yet when we inquire what were the realities which these symbols adumbrated, we are distracted with the various and contradictory answers which are returned; and the mind, instead of resting satisfied with the evidence adduced, is forced to wander in restless uncertainty, or to abandon the subject in hopeless despair. It is not, however, my intention at present to shew the absurdity of the opinions of others, or even to elucidate my own opinion; as a more convenient opportunity will occur for explaining with the greatest minuteness the various kinds of sacrifice, and the particular rites which belonged to each. I shall only observe, that they were designed to convey information of the greatest importance to the people to whom they were enjoined—information not of times, and persons, and events, hid in the darkness of futurity, which would have been the

province not of symbolic representation, but of prophecy ; but of times, and persons, and events, which were then present—information, in short, which, by humanizing the temper, subliming the affections, and rectifying the conduct, tended to assimilate man to the image of his Maker, and thus to establish his hopes of the mercy of God, and of happiness, in every period of his existence, not on any thing independent of his own choice and exertion, but on the purity of his heart and the rectitude of his conduct.



## SECTION II.

### *Of the State and Circumstances of the Ancient World.*

HAVING in the former Section made a few general remarks upon the institution and intention of sacrifice, I am now to prove that the intellectual and moral condition of the ancient world imperiously demanded that institution.

Were we to form our opinions of the ancient world, from what we see at the present day, our opinions would be far from being just. The amusements and employments of infancy do not differ more from the amusements and employments of manhood, than the knowledge and reasonings of the infancy of the world differ from the knowledge and reasonings of its maturity. We can scarcely conceive it possible, that men could now act as they then acted : and from their actions only, when every other mode of information is denied us, can we form any estimate of their intellectual and moral acquirements.

But in forming this estimate, we ought never to forget, that for many ages, the persons whose histories are recorded in Scripture, were under the guidance, not merely of a particular, but of a miraculous providence. I have already mentioned, that then the Almighty daily appeared to them by some visible symbol ; directed them in every difficulty ; defended them in every danger ; and comforted them in every distress. This is now denied us : but will not the difference of our circumstances, from those of the world at first,

fully account for the difference of the Divine conduct? In the infancy of the world, men were in their infancy; and hence were unable to engage in abstract speculation, or to reason out the existence and attributes of the Supreme Being. This rendered it necessary for God to reach their understandings through the medium of the senses; and, by some visible image, to make himself known to them. The Scriptures which we now enjoy, and which we are enabled to turn to our advantage by the invention of writing and the cultivation of our minds, fully compensate for the want of these symbolical appearances, whether by the Shechinah or an Angel. When therefore, we are able to weigh the evidence for the divine origin of the Scriptures, and to draw from them the doctrines, and precepts, and hopes, which they contain, we are exactly in the same situation as the Patriarchs were, when they received the same information by an audible voice. And as our information is equally sure and important and particular, reaching to every circumstance in human life, it possesses the advantage of universality, adapted to the diffusion of men over the surface of the earth at the present day, which single communications could not have had. The ancient saints, therefore, instead of being more favoured than we, were exactly upon a level with us, who enjoy revelation; and there was no doubt the same difference between the condition of those in the infancy of the world who enjoyed these audible communications, and their brethren who did not, as there is between us and the heathen at the present day. In the same manner would I vindicate the greater length of human life at that early

period; as we may arrive at as great perfection in knowledge, purity, and rectitude, in the space of eighty years, as they could in eight hundred. I add, as a mere conjecture, that if the inhabitants of the ancient world are in a state of conscious existence, and are still improving, will not the improvements of this world balance theirs, so that at the general resurrection all mankind will be upon a level, except so far as it will depend upon individual exertion?

But to direct these remarks, which may appear to some a digression, to the subject before us, I would observe, that should it be maintained, that the conduct of men at that period was equal to the conduct of men at the present day, it would not overturn the opinion which I maintain, since the conduct of men at the present day is directed by reason and understanding alone; whereas the conduct of men was then directed, not merely by reason and understanding, but by divine interposition. It is a conclusion too, which I think is warranted by the history of that period, that it was only when that miraculous interposition was actually exerted in their behalf, that they displayed those virtues which really adorned them; and that, when that miraculous interposition was denied, they fell into those egregious follies and enormous vices, which stain their characters, and excite our astonishment. This, I apprehend, is the true reason of that inconsistency of character which they displayed, when the first men of the age for virtue and piety seemed to be at once entirely changed, and performed deeds of folly and wickedness which, upon any other supposition, would be altogether unaccount-

able. I must add too, that as the mother who is training her children to walk, finds it necessary not only to support them, but sometimes to leave them for a moment to themselves, both for their improvement, and to satisfy herself of the success of her endeavours; so was it necessary that the Almighty who was training his children to intellectual and moral excellence, should leave them at times to their own direction, that they might by degrees be accustomed to live without his miraculous assistance; and though he needed no information of their progress, yet they themselves certainly did, both that they might see their need of divine aid, and feel their obligations to be grateful for it.

To illustrate and confirm these observations, I shall appeal to a few particular instances, taken from the history of the world, from its commencement to the giving of the law. When we behold our first parents—taking the narration in Genesis literally as the orthodox do—disobeying, at the suggestions of a brute animal, the express command of their Maker, forfeiting his friendship and protection, subjecting themselves to death and misery, for an apple or some other fruit; at a time when they were surrounded with every thing else which they could desire; when exempted almost from every temptation, and when favoured with daily intercourse with God; we may form a juster estimate of the extent of this knowledge, and of the stability of their moral and religious principles, than from whole volumes of theological declamation, equally destitute of evidence as of truth. To establish the same point, it will not be necessary to dwell upon the conduct of Noah and his sons, after they were miraculously saved from the de-

luge; nor of Lot, his wife, and his daughters, when delivered by divine interposition from the flames of Sodom. In support of the same truth, the conduct of Abraham deserves notice. Notwithstanding all that God had done to inspire him with the love of virtue, and with confidence in the Divine protection, he had the folly and temerity to settle in a place where, to shun the danger that might have attended the discovery of his relation to his wife, he was reduced to the necessity of asserting a falsehood—for, notwithstanding his quibbling apology, it was nothing else—and had even the meanness and the pusillanimity to allow her to be taken to the house of a man who did not even endeavour to conceal his designs, without the least attempt on her part to escape, or on his to deliver her.—I have fixed upon these instances, not because they are the blackest which stain the annals of the infancy and childhood of the world, but because these persons are deservedly accounted the brightest examples of intellectual and moral improvement which illumined and adorned a dark age.

If such, in ancient times, were the lights of the world, even when conducted by miraculous displays of divine wisdom and power, we may easily conceive what would be the condition of the great body of mankind when left to the reasonings of their own understandings, and the impetuous impulse of appetite and passion. To illustrate this, it would not be doing justice to the argument to bring forward the solemn falsehood and low cunning of Jacob, when he obtained the blessing from his aged and blind father; the conduct of Isaac, when he denied his wife at the court of Abi-

melech ; the intercourse of Judah with Tamar ; the conduct of Simeon and Levi to the Shechemites ; and of the patriarchs to Joseph ; because all these persons, either in a greater or a less degree, enjoyed the privilege of divine interposition. It will receive full confirmation, however, from the recollection, that at the time of the deluge, Noah, and perhaps his family, only, were perfect in that generation ; that at the calling of Abraham, every individual of the human race had degenerated into idolatry ; and that in Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain, Lot, with all his imperfections, was not only the best, but the only man who had the least fear of God or regard to righteousness. These are facts which depend upon no hypothesis ; facts which we are bound to admit ; and facts which, when admitted, infallibly establish the point in question. If we then lay aside prejudice, and judge impartially, we must admit that the intellectual and moral excellence to which Adam, and Noah, and Lot, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, who laid the foundation of the Jewish dynasty, was high and dignified indeed, when compared with the state of those amongst whom they lived ; yet, still, many of their actions would not only cloud the character of Christians at the present day, but consign their names to deserved infamy.

As upwards of four hundred years elapsed from the calling of Abraham to the giving of the law, it will perhaps be imagined, that the light of truth, and the practice of righteousness, made great progress during that period. The history of that period, I am afraid, will not support this conclusion. When we



consider the state of degradation, both in speculation and practice, to which the Egyptians must have sunk, when they could perceive no better policy to preserve the allegiance of the Israelites, and make them subservient to their interests, than to crush their spirit and paralyze their power—than “to set over them task-masters to afflict them with their burdens; to make them serve with rigour, till their lives were bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field;”—when we remember that the Israelites were not only subject, for a long period, to such a degraded people, but were really reduced by them to this abject state of slavery and wretchedness, we must be convinced that their minds would be assimilated to their fortune; that every mild, every generous, every manly sentiment, would be extinguished within them.

That this was really the case, their own history clearly proves. Hence, when Moses arose to assert their independence, instead of hailing him as a messenger of God, ordained to burst the fetters of slavery and to vindicate the freedom and the privileges of man, they opposed the arm that was lifted for vengeance; forced their deliverer to seek his safety in exile; and quenched the star of liberty which was dawning upon their country. Nor is this all: after the Almighty, by the most stupendous miracles, had made bare his arm in their behalf, and brought them from the house of bondage, their conduct evinced that they were unworthy of that great redemption: the least accident which subjected them to privation or exposed them to danger, inspired them with the inglorious resolution of

returning again to their oppressors ; of bending their necks to the yoke of slavery, that they might enjoy the mean gratification of “ sitting by the flesh-pots of Egypt and eating bread to the full ;” and not merely the authority, but the life of their deliverer was often in danger from the brutal fury of the very men to whose happiness and dignity his life was devoted. When we reflect too, that they exhibited this temper and spirit at the very time when God, by means of the Shechinah, or cloud of glory, which shed upon them its enlivening beams, and frowned in darkness upon their enemies, was visibly appearing to their senses ; was defending them by his power, and instructing them by his counsels, we shall perceive the truths of their Law-giver’s assertion, “ that they were a stiff-necked and rebellious people, a nation void of counsel, and in whom there was no understanding.”

When, therefore, they came to Mount Sinai, where it was necessary that the Almighty, before they entered into the land of Canaan, should give them a law and a religion, to regulate their conduct ; they had not merely all the ignorance and weakness of children, but what was worse, all the meanness and obstinacy of the slave, —all the rudeness and barbarism of the savage. To soften and to humanize their temper ; to subdue and regulate their passions ; to refine and elevate their affections ; to illumine and strengthen their understandings ; in short, to form them to intellectual and moral excellence, must, as I have already said, have been the great end which God had in view when he formed and instituted their economy. But I have also said, that it must have been absolutely necessary to suit and adjust

the means proper for accomplishing this salutary end, to their particular state and circumstances. Unaccustomed, therefore, as they undoubtedly were, to any mental exertion ; unacquainted with the pleasure which results from the acquisition of knowledge ; ignorant of that “ peace which passeth all understanding,” of that “ joy unspeakable and full of glory,” which arises from the possession and exercise of moral goodness ; and from a comprehensive view of the necessary connexion between present duty and future felicity ; they were altogether unable to rise to the admiration and the adoration of a pure and uncorporeal spirit ; to comprehend the nature or feel the obligation of abstract truth ; or to form proper conceptions of their duty and interest even when revealed, so as to be ever present with them as powerful and permanent principles of action. Before the Almighty could make himself known to such a people, it was necessary, according to the expression of scripture, to humble himself to their ignorance and weakness ; before he could make them perceive and feel the force of duty, it was necessary to present to their senses virtue and vice in a bodily form ; and before he could draw them to obedience by hope and fear, the most powerful of all motives to persons of their character, it was necessary to bring the objects of hope and fear, not merely in contact with the mental but with the bodily eye ; and since they could not rise to the contemplation of the happiness and misery of another world, all that he could do was, to fix their attention and impress their hearts by temporal rewards and punishments. Were we entirely ignorant of the mode of discipline which the Supreme Being adopted

to exalt his creatures to the resemblance of himself, and to prepare them for a nobler state of existence, we should, from an extensive survey of all the circumstances of the case, be convinced, that there could be no way of accomplishing the end in view, but the way which I have mentioned.

Against this reasoning it may be objected, that God, instead of condescending to the ignorance and weakness of his creatures; instead of adopting for their improvement such means, as to minds more enlightened must appear "weak and beggarly;" ought rather to have exalted their intellectual and moral powers to a capacity of perceiving truth in all its native majesty, and of aspiring after moral excellence from a conviction of its intrinsic beauty and dignity.—To overturn this objection, it will be sufficient to prove, that the principle upon which it rests is false; and that if it were true, it would be impossible to reduce it to practice.

That the principle upon which it rests is false, will appear when we consider that the distance between the Creator and the most exalted of his creatures is really infinite; that if there is any difference—perhaps there is none—but if there is any difference in the condescension of God, when he stoops to the capacity of the most intelligent and that of the most ignorant of his rational offspring, that difference must be so small as to be altogether unworthy of notice. All our notions of ignorance, in moral and accountable creatures; are merely relative; and relative to ourselves rather than to God. A race of beings must appear to us to be wise when they are placed on an eminence of intellectual capacity above us; but were we exalted above

them, they would appear to us ignorant. But between uncreated and created intelligence, between absolute and relative rectitude, there must always be an infinite distance: and if the Eternal is to stoop to the situation and circumstances of any of his creatures, it is the same to him whether he choose to descend to the highest or the lowest. If, therefore, it be necessary that God should exalt the creatures, whom he designs to improve in excellence, to a state that would render them absolutely worthy of his regard, he must exalt them to an equality with himself; which is not only impossible, but would destroy the supposition of future improvement.

But the objection is founded, not only on a principle which is false, but upon a principle which is impracticable. That omnipotence can effectuate every thing which does not involve in it a contradiction, is a truth universally admitted. I have, however, had occasion to prove, in another work, that to lead creatures to the possession of moral excellence, by any but moral means, really involves in it a contradiction. That the natural powers and capacities of creatures may, without their own choice, be increased by God, according to his pleasure, is evident; but let them be increased as much as can be supposed, the creatures themselves are still as destitute of virtue, or of moral goodness, as they were before. Virtue, or moral goodness, must begin and terminate with the beginning and the termination of the volition of the agent, to be virtuous or morally good. To suppose that a being can arrive at virtue, without choosing to be virtuous; or, that he can continue virtuous after he has ceased to wish to be virtu-

ous, is to suppose an impossibility. Taking it for granted, then, that it is consistent with the wisdom and goodness of God to form creatures of every degree of intellectual and moral capacity, the precise rank in which they are originally placed, or to which they have reduced themselves, being once fixed and ascertained, the exertion of mere power to exalt them to a greater degree of moral excellence is out of the question ; nothing remains to accomplish that purpose but the adoption of means, and of moral means, suited to their real state and circumstances ; adapted, not to supersede the freedom of choice, or the exercise of powers and abilities, but to persuade to a right choice, and to lead to the proper exercise of these powers and abilities.

I must add, that the performance of miracles, upon proper occasions, affords no exception to the foregoing reasoning. Miracles, it must be allowed, are perhaps the most powerful of all means which the Supreme Being can employ in consistency with the moral agency of his creatures. Still, however, they appear from the event, to be not irresistible ; to be perfectly compatible with the freedom of will ; and hence they still leave to man his accountability. Indeed, I suppose, that the most stupendous miracles have really no more influence over the freedom of choice among men, such as the Israelites were at their departure from Egypt, and the Jews at the time of our Saviour, than persuasion and reasoning have among us at the present day. The sum of the force employed ought never, in subjects of this kind, to be considered abstractly, but in reference to the resistance to be overcome. The moral power of miracles, then, to convince an understanding clouded

with ignorance, perverted by prejudice, hardened by vice, and stimulated by passion, against the truth, is, in reality, not greater than the power of reasoning over an understanding, formed by education, by habit, and by inclination, to weigh the force of evidence, and “to receive the truth in the love of it.” It was upon this ground that I formerly said, that with minds illumined as ours are, we are placed in circumstances as favourable to moral and religious improvement, when we enjoy the Scriptures, as were our first parents and their immediate descendants, when favoured with daily intercourse with the Supreme Being. Were the doctrines, the precepts, the hopes of Christianity, proposed in all their native beauty, consistency, and importance, to a people entirely ignorant of them, but a people free from prejudice, and equally civilized and enlightened as the great body of the people of this country are at the present day, I am convinced that a clear, a rational, a manly appeal to their heart and understanding, would make more converts among them than were made by the preaching of our Lord and his apostles among the Jews, when confirmed by miracles.

These remarks, I apprehend, will fully vindicate the conduct of God, in giving to the Jews the peculiar dispensation under which they were placed. Considered abstractly, it was very far from reaching the perfection of the Christian dispensation; considered in relation to that people, upon whom the Christian dispensation would have been entirely lost, its perfection appears evident. That simplicity and plainness, bordering upon trifling, which a mother employs in teaching her children the alphabet, and to unite letters into syllables, is

much better adapted to lay the foundations of literary excellence in their infant minds, than would be the eloquent and powerful ratiocinations of a Campbell, a Reid, or a Stewart. Thus the dispensation of Moses, with all its "carnal ordinances," with all its "beggarly elements," had a greater influence—produced more virtue and goodness amongst the Jews at that period, than the sublimer dispensation of Jesus would have done. Indeed, I imagine that the influence which its moral precepts really had, was owing to the external ceremonies appended to them; and that if the Jews had not been led to obey the former by means of the latter, that dispensation would have entirely failed.

This important conclusion does not altogether depend upon the reasoning which have been adduced, but is confirmed by actual experiment. In conformity with the sentiments of all antiquity, as well as of many of the first names of the present day, I apprehend that the Almighty really made the experiment, what moral influence a pure and spiritual dispensation, free in a great measure from external ceremonies, could have upon the Israelites; and that it was not till the event proved that they were unworthy of it, that the shadowy, and emblematic economy, which continued to the time of our Saviour, was enjoined them.

Nor let it be objected, that this experiment could serve no purpose; that God must have "known the end from the beginning;" and that, since it is acknowledged a more perfect dispensation was not adapted for them, a more perfect dispensation would not have been tried. Could no other purpose have been accomplished by the experiment but the one which the objection



brings forward, the objection, I confess, would have great weight. But to inform or to satisfy God, that the Israelites were not prepared for a more spiritual dispensation, was really no design of the experiment at all. The experiment was designed to give information, not to God, but to man,—to display to the conviction of every succeeding generation the ignorance and obstinacy of the Israelites; and thus to vindicate the wisdom and goodness of God in adapting their economy to their capacities. It was in imitation of this conduct, and to accomplish the same benevolent purpose, that John the Baptist, immediately before his death, sent his disciples to our Lord with this question, “Art thou He that should come; or are we to look for another?” Matt. xi. 3. We cannot suppose that John himself wanted any information upon this point. From the beginning he was perfectly convinced that Jesus was He that should come, and that no other was to be expected. As our Lord said, He was not “like a reed shaken with the wind,” one who, at different times, would give a different testimony; nor like one trained to the flattery and inconsistency of a court, who, as circumstances should change, would give and retract his approbation. The design of John, therefore, was, before his death, to lead his followers to acknowledge his Lord, by giving them, as a foundation of belief, the evidence of miracles. Hence, when they came to Jesus, the miracles which he was then performing, and the gospel which he was then preaching to the poor, had such a powerful influence upon their minds, that after the death of John they returned to Jesus, and acknowledged him to be the Messiah.

That the influence of a pure and spiritual religion, divested in a great measure of external ceremonies, was really tried upon the Israelites, may be established from their history, and from the declaration of the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New. During the period that they remained in Egypt, no new ceremonies were enjoined them. The sacrifices, which had been transmitted to them by their ancestors, were, no doubt, still offered up; but as these were reduced to no regular system; as they were explained by no new revelation, and sanctioned by no new command; they appear to have been not only simple in their nature and few in number, but to have been left, as to their performance, to the will of the offerer. Even at the period when, according to the prophet Ezek., (xx. 6, 7,) "God lifted up his hand to bring them forth of the land of Egypt," not a word was spoken respecting the importance and necessity of positive institutions; but this was the command enjoined them: "Cast away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord."

It cannot escape the most inattentive observer, that though their murmuring, when they came to Marah, (Exod. xv.) proved that they had derived little or no advantage from the pure precepts of morality and religion, which had been already given them; yet the Almighty still pursued the same course of discipline, that the experiment of its efficacy might be fairly made. The account, I confess, which Moses gives of this event, is very short; but his expressions clearly indicate, that a declaration of the will of God had, upon that occasion, been announced to them in a manner peculiarly solemn

and impressive. That the precepts delivered to them were altogether of a moral and spiritual nature, is evident from the words of God: "If thou wilt diligently," says he, "hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep his statutes; I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord which healeth thee."—The words too, "There made he for them a statute and an ordinance; and there he proved them," with which Moses introduces this declaration of duty, not only mark the circumstance and solemnity attending it, but inform us of the particular end which God had in view. The whole of his conduct seems to have been designed to prove, by actual experiment, the temper and spirit, the capacity and power of the Israelites, both in an intellectual and moral view, in order that he might adapt to their real state and circumstances that dispensation which it was necessary for him to give them, before they took possession of their inheritance.

Nor is it to be forgotten, that even their conduct at Sin and Rephidim, though marked with the most aggravated sensuality, distrust, ingratitude, and pusillanimity, did not induce the Almighty to change the mode of instruction which he had adopted. This is evident from what I am now to mention. In order to give the precepts of eternal rectitude every support which could be derived from external circumstances, the events recorded in the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Exodus, took place. Preparatory to the solemn scene which they were about to witness, the Israelites were

commanded "to wash their clothes," as an emblem of that sanctity which they were called to cultivate. A boundary, too, was drawn around Mount Sinai, which, under pain of death, neither man nor beast was to violate. The morning of the appointed day was ushered in with thunders and lightnings; the mountain was involved in a thick cloud; and the voice of a trumpet waxed louder and louder. When Sinai was altogether on a smoke, the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. Then it was that the Almighty announced to the Jews the moral law to be the eternal rule of their conduct; and, that it might be transmitted to their posterity, Moses was commanded to ascend the mountain, where he was to receive it engraven by the finger of God upon tables of stone.

When we contemplate the circumstances of grandeur and majesty which accompanied the promulgation of this law, we should imagine that its influence upon the Jews would be powerful and permanent. Far from establishing this natural supposition, the event proves the contrary; and the voice of the Eternal scarcely ceased to vibrate in their ears, till the words which he had uttered were forgotten. Emboldened by the absence of Moses, who seems to have been removed from them that the trial might be fairly made, their untractable temper, their grovelling spirit, at once appeared; the idols of Egypt, and the pompous and impure and childish ceremonies which were performed in the worship addressed to them, rose fresh in their memories, and claimed all their affection; and, despising a pure

and spiritual worship, they demanded a religion which was to employ, not the mind, but the body ; which was addressed, not to the heart, but to the senses ; and which, not by its internal principles, but by its external parade and ceremony, presented something defined and tangible to their degraded understandings. The golden calf, therefore, the Osiris of the Egyptians, was brought into existence in the camp of that ignorant and superstitious people ; a crowd of absurd and impious and wicked ceremonies followed in its train ; and a God who was to be worshipped in spirit and in truth was remembered no more. This, as it was a sufficient trial of the temper and conduct of this people, was the last. All hope of the efficacy of a spiritual religion, upon their rude and degenerate minds, was completely blasted. A dispensation, as a mode of discipline, perfect in itself, but rendered altogether inefficient through the imperfection of those to whom it was given, was for many generations abandoned ; and, since it was found impossible to adapt men and circumstances to principles and institutions, the only alternative that remained was to adapt principles and institutions to men and circumstances.

• To accomplish this, Moses was commanded a second time to ascend the mountain ; and as the tables which contained the Ten Commandments had been broken, others were formed and delivered to him. To the ceremonies which the Israelites derived from their ancestors, many others were now added ; and the whole being reduced to a complicated, yet regular, system, was enjoined by the express authority of God. A description of a tabernacle, or place of public worship,

suited to the temper and genius of the people, and to the nature of the service to be performed in it, was likewise presented to Moses, and was commanded to be immediately carried into execution. The design of the whole, I apprehend, is evident and good. Whilst it was calculated, by its external pomp and magnificence, to wean the hearts of the Israelites from the unmeaning and impure and cruel rites of the Egyptians, to which from habit they were unhappily greatly addicted; it was equally calculated, as I shall afterwards prove, to lead their minds to the love and practice of that pure and spiritual religion and morality which it was admirably formed to adumbrate, and to promote which it was appointed.

The dispensation of Moses, therefore, consisted of two parts, which, as they are perfectly distinct and different, ought never to be confounded. The first part, to which I formerly adverted, comprehended all the moral precepts, originally written upon the heart by the finger of God, which were enjoined for their own intrinsic excellence, and which, when mentioned in contradistinction to its positive precepts, are in the writings of Paul emphatically called "the righteousness of the law." The second part comprehended all the positive precepts, delivered to Moses when he ascended the second time into the mount; which were appointed, not for their own sake, but to promote a nobler end; and which, when mentioned in the writings of Paul in contradistinction to its moral precepts, are emphatically called "the works of the law." The former, as the doctrine which I maintain requires, is spoken of in scripture as the substance and the body; the latter, as the

shadow and the image. The former was the end to be accomplished; the latter, the auxiliary means for accomplishing this end. Had this evident and natural distinction been constantly attended to, all the obscurity and contradiction which theologians have found in the writings of Paul, would, as I have proved when explaining justification, never have been heard of; and the dispensation of Moses, so far from being accounted unworthy of God, as it has often been represented, would have been accounted a signal instance, not only of his goodness and condescension, but of his wisdom and rectitude.

But, lest it be thought that I have strained the history of Moses to support an hypothesis, I now proceed to shew that my doctrine is fully established by the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New.—We shall first attend to the prophet Jeremiah. In the seventh chapter of his prophecies, he thus describes the wickedness of the Jews: “Ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely; and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods.”—But notwithstanding this dreadful neglect of moral righteousness, they seem, with much attention, to have observed the positive precepts of their religion, and to have indulged the vain hope, too prevalent in every age, that the performance of the latter would compensate for the neglect of the former. To overturn the foundation of this confidence, the Almighty, at the twenty-first verse, thus addresses them: “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Put your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in

the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." And he adds, "But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imaginations of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward."

Nothing can be more obscure and difficult than this passage, upon the common hypothesis—upon the hypothesis that God, at the same time that he promulgated the moral law, appointed the ceremonial law merely to be a type of the Christian dispensation. Hence various have been the attempts of commentators to escape from a difficulty which could have had no existence if they had attended to fact and not to conjecture. Indeed, the declaration of the prophet is nothing but a commentary on the words of Moses, (Exod. xv. 25, 26,) already alluded to, and a plain narration of facts which really took place. The meaning is obvious. Ye trust, says he, in the performance of your ceremonies, as if they composed the whole of religion, never recollecting that when I brought you from Egypt, I never mentioned them. Nor would I have mentioned them at all, had not the blindness and hardness of your hearts rendered their appointment absolutely necessary. It is in vain for you, then, to offer unto me your beasts in sacrifice, when the performance of these ceremonies has no moral influence upon your conduct. Sin-offerings and burnt-offerings were appointed, not for their own sake, but as means



to promote the nobler purposes of purity and righteousness. Since you do not improve them to these purposes, add them all together, and eat them as common food; for it will be no greater violation of the divine law not to offer them at all, than to offer them without any reference to that moral purity and righteousness which they were designed to adumbrate and to promote.

But, clear and consistent as is this passage in support of my opinion, when interpreted in consistency with the truth of history, the prophet Ezekiel gives us still more explicit information. Indeed, the twentieth chapter of his prophecies is rather an historical record of the establishment of the law, than a prophecy, and contains as full an account of the various circumstances of that singular event as the annals of Moses. From the fourth book of Warburton's *Divine Legation*, where an admirable commentary on the chapter under review is given, I find that Dr. Spencer was the person who first explained it in a proper manner. As I never saw Spencer's work, it is to Warburton only that I can refer.

“In the day that I lifted up my hand unto them,” says God, at the sixth verse, “to bring them forth of the land of Egypt, into a land that I had espied for them—then I said unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”—But what was the consequence? “They rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me,” says the Almighty. “They did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake

the idols of Egypt.”—This roused the anger of God to such a degree, that he said, “ I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But,” adds he, “ I wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt. Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.”—Mark what follows: “ And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover, also, I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.”

From this important passage, it is evident that the Israelites were not only addicted to all the wickedness and idolatries of Egypt, but that God endeavoured to reform them, even during their abode there, not by giving them positive institutions addressed to the senses, but pure and spiritual precepts addressed to the understanding. It is also evident that these had no moral effect upon them whatever: they still wallowed in every vice; they still clung to the idols of Egypt; so that the Almighty would have been perfectly vindicated from every imputation of severity—for that is all that can be meant by the expressions in the end of the eighth and beginning of the ninth verses—would have been perfectly vindicated from every imputation of severity, had he immediately cut them off, which in just judgment he would have done, had it not been necessary to exercise still further forbearance and

mercy, in order to improve the nations around them in the knowledge of the unity and perfections of God, and of his wise and righteous administration. That these purposes of universal benevolence to men—for, were this a proper place, it might be easily proved that God was good to Israel from no blind and partial affection to a few, but to <sup>a</sup>make these few the instruments of blessing, in the most effectual manner, every nation under heaven—that these purposes of universal benevolence to men might be accomplished, it is evident that God brought them from Egypt into the wilderness, where they received from Him statutes and judgments for their direction.

Now, nothing, I apprehend, is more certain, than that the statutes and judgments here mentioned, are the various branches of moral and eternal righteousness, contained in the ten commandments, which God at first gave to the Israelites, when, at Mount Sinai, he deigned to enter into covenant with them. The assertion here made, “that if a man do them, he shall live in them,” whilst it is applicable to no positive precepts whatever, is perfectly applicable to the moral law—in short, is nothing else but the assertion of our Lord differently expressed, that whoever would enter into life must keep the commandments. Nor can it escape observation, that the institution of the sabbath, the only positive precept given them at that period, is mentioned in the twelfth verse, not merely as a precept of a different kind, but as added to the others. “Moreover also,” says he, “I gave them my sabbaths.” For, whilst the precepts of universal and eternal righteousness, obligatory upon the whole race of men, are

mentioned as belonging to them as men ; the institution of the sabbath is mentioned as belonging to them, not as men, but as members of his church, who had devoted themselves to him by a solemn covenant ; of which the institution of the sabbath was the peculiar sign or distinguishing token, which nothing but a positive precept could be.

From this accurate account of the nature of that law which God at first gave to the Jews, he proceeds to describe the conduct of the Jews afterward. “ But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness : they walked not in my statutes ; and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them ; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted : then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them. But I wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out.” It is impossible not to recognize in these verses, all the circumstances mentioned in the history of Moses. The defection of the Israelites ; after receiving the moral law, into idolatry, by making the golden calf ; the anger of God against them on account of that wickedness ; the intercession of Moses in their behalf ; and the reason that induced the Almighty to take them again under his protection ; are all clearly and specifically enumerated.

I cannot but observe, that were we certain, that the day on which they offered their adoration to their idol, was the sabbath, or any one of those days which had been appropriated to the worship of the true God, there would be a peculiar propriety and force in the declara-

tion of the prophet which he repeats with great emphasis, that they polluted his sabbaths. The conduct of Aaron, (Exod. xxxii. 5,) makes this supposition highly probable. We are told, that having built an altar before the idol, he made proclamation, and said, "To-morrow is a feast to the Lord;" which seems to indicate, that the proclamation was made, not to appoint a new feast, but to remind them of the return of a feast already appointed. The word *an*, too, which is employed to denote this festival, and which is derived from a word signifying "to move round," gives some support to this conjecture, as implying that the feast happened in the ordinary revolution of time. It would not be doing justice to the English reader, however, were I not to mention that this term may be employed for another reason—from its bearing a reference to those circular dances which were exhibited at these festivals, not only in the worship of idols, but, as appears from the conduct of David and of others, in honour of the true God. The conduct of the people, recorded in the end of the sixth verse, may allude to this circumstance, though it ought to be mentioned, that the word rendered "to play," has no relation whatever to the word in question.

It will not only explain the expression of Aaron, "to-morrow is a feast to the Lord;" but give us some information concerning the real nature of that idolatry which the Israelites committed, and which roused the indignation of the Supreme Being, to remark, that the people by no means imagined that the calf which they had made was really a god, or that any true divinity, or indeed, any thing divine, resided in it. They sup-

posed it to be only a visible representation of the Divine Being, and honoured it as such. Indeed, the word image, which is commonly applied to the whole race of idols, or likeness, found in the second commandment, proves that not the substance nor essence, but the representation or symbol of the Deity, was supposed to be manifested. The reason, too, which induced the Israelites to have recourse to this idol, confirms the same opinion. "When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said, Up, make us gods which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." Moses, if I may use the expression, had formerly acted as the representative of God. "Speak thou with us, and we will hear," was their request to him, "but let not God speak with us, lest we die." But he had now been absent so long, that they despaired of his return; and to supply his place, this image of the true God was formed. Indeed, their own declaration is perfectly decisive: "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Ignorant as they really were, no person can believe, that they were so stupid as to suppose that an idol, which their fingers had then formed of their earrings and trinkets, was really the God, which, long before its formation, had delivered them from Egypt. The language, too, which they addressed to it, is exactly the same which they employed concerning Moses. He was the *man*, as it was the *God*, which had brought them from Egypt; and as he could not

be mistaken for the God of Israel, whom he only represented, neither could the calf be mistaken for him whom it only represented.

That Moses acted in this capacity, is evident from the words of God himself, *Exod. iv. 16*: Aaron, says He, “shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of a God.” I cannot but add, since I have digressed from the subject thus far, that the infinite distance which there is between the Creator and creatures, such as we are in this present state, seems to render this mode of communication absolutely necessary. Indeed, this is one reason why God in these latter days has spoken unto us by his Son. Hence is he likewise denominated “the image of the invisible God,” or his representative, to the children of men; and in his superiority as the image of God, above Moses or the Shechinah, which were formerly appointed for similar purposes, consists in some measure, the superiority of the Gospel above every former dispensation. But leaving our Saviour at present, I think it is evident from the history of all the idolatry which was ever practised, that its votaries never imagined that the images, whether pictures or statues, which they honoured, were really gods, or that the canvas or brass had any true divinity. They esteemed them as representatives only of the invisible powers which they worshipped, and employed them merely as helps to raise their imaginations, and to fix their attention on the real object of their adoration. I speak not now of the very dregs of the people, who, properly speaking, had no opinion at all; but of those who could

think and reason upon the subject. From the history of the Israelites formerly, as well as from the canons of the church of Rome at the present day, it is evident, that this opinion has universally prevailed; and indeed, it is the only opinion which can admit of any shadow of defence or palliation.

But to return from this digression, which is not only important in itself, but is in some degree connected with the subject before us, I remark, that the various circumstances already mentioned, regarding the promulgation of the moral law, are not only clearly alluded to by the prophet; but what is more, the institution of the ceremonies of the Mosaic economy is specifically mentioned. But what is of primary importance upon this subject, is, that the institution of these ceremonies is mentioned, not only as subsequent to the promulgation of the ten commandments, but as subsequent to the idolatry of the Israelites; and consequently must have taken place when Moses ascended the mountain the second time. Nor ought it to be omitted, that the defection of the Israelites into idolatry, is the very reason assigned by the prophet, which induced the Almighty to appoint these ceremonies. As a full proof of this, I cannot refrain from soliciting, in a particular manner, the attention of the reader to the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses: "Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols; wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live."

Now, the manner in which the statutes and judg-



ments, mentioned in the eleventh verse, are contrasted with the statutes and judgments mentioned here, is too singular to escape observation. Whilst the former are statutes and judgments, "which if a man do, he shall live by them;" the latter are statutes "that are not good," and judgments whereby "they shall not live." As it is impossible not to find in the first those moral commandments which, according to Christ Jesus, a man must obey that he may obtain everlasting life; so it is impossible not to recognize in the last the weak and beggarly elements of St. Paul, or that law of carnal commandments mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that could not make him that did the service perfect; which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation, and which were therefore to be disannulled because of their weakness and unprofitableness.

But this reasoning will receive additional confirmation from several passages of the New Testament, which allude to the idolatry of the Israelites as the reason of the establishment of the Mosaic economy. The declaration of Paul, Rom. v. 20, which, as I proved when treating of original sin, ought to be rendered, "But the law entered when the offence did abound," seems at least to allude to the sin of the Israelites; and if, as I have attempted to establish, the sin into which Adam fell, and in which he was imitated by all his descendants till Christ came, was idolatry, it will tend greatly to confirm the point in question. The third chapter of the second Corinthians deserves to be considered too, as intimately connected with this subject; but as it is

attended with some difficulty, a more detailed investigation must be submitted to, which will come in more conveniently in another place. But the most express passage to this purpose is Gal. iii. 19, where the Apostle elucidates the very subject which we are now considering, and inquires into the design of the legal economy. "Wherefore then serveth the law?" is the question proposed. "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come," is the direct reply. This clearly informs us that the Mosaic ceremonies were not given at the same time with the moral law, but were afterward added to it; that the reason why this addition was made, was because of transgressions, which can allude to nothing but the wickedness and idolatry of the Israelites; and that this addition was to be only in force for a limited time, till the seed should come—till the world was prepared to receive and improve the nobler dispensation of Christ Jesus. Nothing could prove more forcibly the justness of the translation which I just now gave of Rom. v. 20, than this expression of the same writer, or give more decisive support to the opinion which I am now establishing.

It would not be doing justice to the subject, were I to omit the reasoning of Paul which immediately follows. He represents the Jews, in former times, as children in their nonage, who, not having arrived at the full vigour and exercise of their powers, stood in need of the aid and assistance of a teacher or school-master, who, otherwise, would have been unnecessary. The law, therefore, says he, was that very preceptor or guide which their infancy and nonage required. As it

was a teacher or schoolmaster, its office clearly indicated that their minds were ignorant and weak, and that its own use or authority would be only temporary. If the Israelites, then, had reached a state of manhood, at the period which we are now contemplating, this schoolmaster would not have been assigned them : and as the end which he was to accomplish by his discipline, was to enlarge the powers and capacities of that people to a fitness for receiving a pure and spiritual religion, the doctrine which I maintain is established—the Israelites were not fit nor qualified before for such a dispensation.

I must observe, that as our translators do not seem to have fully perceived the meaning of the Apostle, they, from their own imperfect views, have given a direction to his reasoning which does not belong to it. The truth which Paul labours to establish, is, that the law was appointed to train up the Jews from a state of childhood to a state of manhood—to cherish, and strengthen, and mature, their intellectual and moral powers, to that perfection, which would enable them to improve a more pure and spiritual religion ; which more pure and spiritual religion would be given them, as soon as they were qualified to receive it. But the opinion which our translators inculcate, is, that the law was appointed to be typical of the gospel, rather than to prepare them for it ; to direct the eyes of the Jews to Christ, till such time as he should come, rather than to enable them to profit by him, when he should come ;—an end which, as I shall afterwards shew, neither had, nor indeed could have, any salutary influence upon that people ; and hence, an end, which,

so far from being a reason for establishing such an imperfect dispensation, would have been a reason against it; as it would have implied that they were then qualified for a more perfect dispensation, if God had chosen to have instituted it. According to the doctrine of Paul, God would have given them a more perfect dispensation, had they been prepared for it; but as they were not prepared for it, he gave them a dispensation suited to their capacities, which in time would prepare them for a better. According to the doctrine of our translators, God might have given them a more perfect dispensation, had he been pleased to do so; but as he was not pleased, he gave them an imperfect dispensation to direct their eyes to a better, till it should come. But should we even allow that the imperfect dispensation could direct their eyes to a better, it would not vindicate the conduct of God; as the view of the better dispensation would have rendered them dissatisfied with what they had, and could never have had the same influence upon them, which the perfect dispensation would have had, if it had been vouchsafed. But if it be true, which I hope yet to prove, that the imperfect dispensation never did direct the eyes of a single Jew, in the sense of the orthodox, to that better dispensation, the absurdity of the common hypothesis must be apparent. I add, too, the insertion of the words "to bring us," in the twenty-fourth verse, clearly reveals the opinion of our translators respecting the ceremonies of Moses—that they were appointed only as types and figures, to direct the minds of the Israelites to Jesus and his dispensation. No supplement appears to me necessary. "The law was

our schoolmaster until Christ," is the rendering of the original, and makes the sense complete. While the Israelites were in their infancy, the powers and abilities of their teacher were wisely adapted to theirs: but when they arrived at manhood, they were transferred to other hands. Christ then came, who, being a nobler teacher, superseded the law, and placed them under the more perfect and powerful discipline of the gospel.

It is upon this ground, and this alone, that the conduct of God, in giving the Jews such an imperfect dispensation as the Mosaic undoubtedly was, can, or ought to be, defended. Every objection brought against it, from the weak and beggarly elements which it contained, is at once overturned. By giving them a dispensation, such as Christianity is, at a period when they could neither comprehend its nature, nor relish its enjoyments, the Almighty might have insulted the weakness, and sported with the ignorance of his creatures; but he never could have advanced their improvement and happiness, nor displayed his own wisdom and goodness. But by acting in the manner, which from scripture I imagine he did act, his conduct is nothing else, from the beginning of time, but a display of wisdom, of goodness, and of condescension, which must not only exalt his character, but must make him, to all his intelligent offspring, the object of their highest admiration, and love, and imitation. Thus then, it appears, that the conduct of God, in every age, has been directed to give his creatures means of improvement, not only adapted to their state and circumstances, but calculated to prepare them for the proper reception of still more exalted means; and as, by the right use

of these, they rise in intelligence and goodness, they must also rise in dignity and happiness. While such conduct in the Eternal is adapted in every point of view to inspire us with every pious feeling and sentiment, and to lead us to every virtuous, every moral action, it is every way worthy of Him, who has denominated himself the Father of mercies and the God of all grace and consolation.

Against the reasoning which has been adduced, it may be objected, that the effect which the moral law, independent of external ceremonies, would have produced upon the Israelites, was scarcely tried, as their idolatry immediately followed its promulgation. This objection, I acknowledge, would have some weight, if the precepts of the moral law had been unknown to the Israelites till they arrived at Mount Sinai. But the truth is, all these precepts had been repeatedly enjoined them long before, as will appear from an attentive perusal of their history, especially from *Exod. xv. 25*. It is probable, too, that the moral precepts formerly delivered to them, were far more numerous than is commonly imagined; that they were adapted to every circumstance and relation in life; and that the ten commandments, so far from being a fuller enumeration of practical rules than they already possessed, were rather an epitome, or abridgment of statutes already acknowledged; and which from its perspicuity and conciseness was well adapted to take a firm hold of the memory; and to suggest, rather than to exhibit, in detail, the whole duty of man. That this must have been the case, at least virtually, is evident from this, that as these precepts were written upon the heart of

man by the finger of God, they must have been known to the Jews, in common with the rest of mankind. This is a remark which ought never to be lost sight of, in the treating of this subject. We are too apt to speak as if the moral law had received its existence at Mount Sinai. Nothing however is farther from the truth. Its nature is eternal; and its power and authority over man were coeval with his existence. Hence, though it was first promulgated by an audible voice at Mount Sinai, it did not there receive its origin. Then it may be said to have been incorporated with the polity of the Jews: and when that polity was dissolved at the death of our Lord, it then returned again to its former isolated state; but its power and authority were still unimpaired. Its influence upon the Israelites, then, was fully tried; and as it was proclaimed by God, in the solemn and impressive manner recorded *Exod. xx.*, before Moses left them, it is probable that the reason why he ascended the mountain, and remained there so long, was to make that trial as fairly as possible. By this means was ascertained what influence a pure and spiritual religion really would have upon the Israelites, from its own intrinsic obligation and authority, independent of that external and adventitious force which it derived from the personal presence and authority of Moses.

The only other objection which I apprehend may be brought against the doctrine that I maintain, is, that the dispensation of Moses was so far from qualifying the Jews for the reception of a purer religion, that when our Lord really came, and published the gospel, the great body of the people rejected it. To

this I would reply, that though it must be admitted that the Jews, as a nation, rejected Christianity, yet their state and circumstances, as well as their conduct, were very different from what they were in the time of Moses. In the former period, they were ignorant and rude; in the latter, they were prejudiced and obstinate. In the former, they could neither comprehend the nature, nor feel the obligation of a spiritual religion, which they willingly received, as soon as it was proposed to them; in the latter, they would not receive a spiritual religion, whose nature they were able to comprehend, and whose force they really did feel. Hence, in the former case, their wickedness was that of a rude and ignorant barbarian; in the latter, that of a polished and cunning hypocrite. It ought to be remembered too, that polytheism was the root of every moral evil which universally pervaded, not merely the Israelites, but the ancient world. Against this "sin unto death," therefore, the Almighty bent the chief force of all his moral institutions at that early period; and endeavoured to build that religion which alone can promote the dignity and happiness of man upon the only foundation on which it can rest—the unity of the Supreme Being. To bring men to the belief of this great and radical principle of all that is valuable in religion and morality, was the design which God had in view when he called Abraham; and as every nation had its own local deity, who was worshipped with rites peculiar to himself, the Almighty, whilst he claimed to himself the sole dominion of heaven and earth, condescended to be called, in a peculiar manner, the God of Abraham and his descendants. The success of that



dispensation, therefore, which divine wisdom adopted to reform the world, must be estimated according as polytheism was eradicated, and the unity of God established in the world. Now, during many generations, after they came from Egypt, the Jews were constantly degenerating into the grossest polytheism and idolatry that ever debased the human character; but during a long time before the coming of Christ, what other vices soever they might be guilty of, they kept themselves free from these abominations. If their hearts, therefore, had been equal to their understandings when our Lord arrived, they would have embraced his religion and brought forth the fruits of it.

Nor, though it should be admitted, that their captivity in Babylon completely cured them of polytheism and idolatry, will it disprove the doctrine which I maintain. Their abode formerly in Egypt was so far from weaning them from these abominations, that in fact, it reconciled them to them; and had their minds been as rude and uninformed when they were carried to Babylon, their abode in that country would have produced the same effect. It may be replied, that as they were so ignorant as to degenerate into the idolatry of the neighbouring nations till they were conquered by the Babylonians, it is not just to impute the sudden change which took place in their conduct at that period to their improvement in knowledge. But as their captivity in Babylon was really a part of those means which God adopted, not only to advance their own improvement, but the improvement of the world by disseminating among their conquerors, through their instrumentality, juster notions of the unity of the Su-

preme Being, and the worship that belongs to him, the objection confirms the point in question. I imagine, that I can perceive too a difference in the character of their idolatry in the early period of their history from what it had afterward. Whilst the whole nation, to a man, joined in making the golden calf, there were many in the apostacies which took place imbefore the captivity, who retained their integrity, and endeavoured to oppose the stream of corruption. At the former period, too, the people, in opposition to their rulers, from their love to idolatry, bowed down to their idol; but at the latter period, they bowed down to idols only in obedience to the authority of their kings; who favoured idolatry not so much from a regard to it, as from a conviction that it was favourable to the gratification of criminal indulgence, and to the exercise of despotic power. Their history likewise proves that their kings generally blended their idolatrous practices with the institutions of Moses, in order that they might give the same authority to both; and that thus the former were introduced under the protection of the latter; just as in the dark ages, an artful and wicked priesthood blended those doctrines which favoured their interests or passions, with the doctrines of Christianity, and thus reconciled the multitude to superstitions, which otherwise they would have despised. But at Babylon, idolatry appeared without any adventitious circumstance to veil its absurdity and wickedness, or to throw around it a borrowed sanctity; and hence, the minds of the Jews revolted at the deformity of its features, when exposed naked to the view.

But another circumstance must not be omitted,

which had still more influence upon their future conduct. When the Jews returned from Babylon, all those whose minds were reconciled to polytheism and idolatry remained in that country; and those only whose intellectual and moral powers rose superior to the conduct of their ancestors, or of their conquerors, returned to their native land. The Jews, therefore, were thus purged of that old leaven of idolatry which formerly corrupted the whole lump, and ever after maintained the unity of God, and refrained from the idolatry of the neighbouring nations. Hence, in the time of our Lord, they were too well informed to pay the least attention to the absurd doctrines of polytheism, or the ridiculous rites of idolatry, which now had no hold upon them from deep-rooted prejudices, and which are the growth of an ignorant rather than of a wicked age. Indeed, the history of the world proves, that ignorance is the mother of idolatry; that idolatry is the parent of wickedness; and that wickedness, if the original ignorance be dissipated by science, which not unfrequently is the case, instead of establishing the authority of its parent, overturns it, and transforms the idolater into the infidel. Thus then does it appear, that the dispensation of Moses, in a great measure, accomplished its end, by maintaining, among the Jews, the primary principle of all religion, the unity of the Supreme Being, amid all the polytheism and idolatry that surrounded it, and prepared them for the reception of the sublimer religion of Jesus. Of this, no other proof seems necessary, than the fact that many Jews in their own country, and still more that were dispersed abroad, who were not superior to their bre-

thren in understanding and science, though certainly superior in disposition and heart, embraced the gospel and improved it to all the purposes of life and godliness.

It should likewise be remembered that the ignorance and barbarism of the Israelites, when they left Egypt, were not peculiar to that people, but belonged to the whole species : indeed I suspect that the nations around them were much worse. The propensity which they displayed to polytheism and idolatry, and to the external pomp and ceremony of religion, was the great principle which at that time actuated every tribe upon the face of the earth. Hence, at that period, no nation was better qualified than the Jews for preserving the great doctrines of the unity of God, and of the worship and obedience which belong to him. But at the time of our Saviour, the vices which precluded the Jews from embracing the gospel, were the vices of the nation, but not of the species. They were self-conceited, and prejudiced, and obstinate ; but the nations around them were not. Hence, though the Jews rejected Christianity, the Gentiles embraced it, and have retained it to the present day.

It may be added, that though the Gentiles, at the coming of our Saviour, were idolaters, yet idolatry rested then upon a very different basis from what it did in former ages. In former ages, men established idolatry because they believed it ; and because their understandings could not rise superior to its absurdities. In the age of our Lord, it was merely tolerated, only because it had been long established ; and hence, though the lower orders, both in Greece and Rome, did not

call it in question, only because they questioned nothing, yet the great body of those who possessed the learning and science of the age, despised it as impious and absurd. The corruptions of natural religion then, like the corruptions of revealed religion at present, were not openly opposed, not because men believed them, but because they were too careless about religion to undergo the labour, or brave the danger that must attend every change, however salutary. It might, I suppose, be proved, that the foundations of idolatry were thus loosened through the means which God had adopted for that purpose; namely, by separating the seed of Abraham to himself to be continual witnesses in the world of the unity of God; by the frequent dispersions of that people among the surrounding nations; and by the diffusion of the Scriptures in the Septuagint translation. But however this was effected, still it is evident, that when Christianity was published, the authority of idolatry was merely prescriptive; and had it not been established in a ruder and a darker age, it could not have been established at all. Not only the Jews then, but the world in general, was better prepared for the reception and improvement of a pure and spiritual religion than at any former period.

The last remark which I would make upon this subject, is, that we should not be far from the truth, were we to conclude, that every dispensation which God has given to men has been rather above than below the degree of intellectual improvement to which they had previously arrived. The dispensation of Moses, notwithstanding all its external, and, in some measure, puerile ceremonies, was really too pure and spiritual

for the Jews when it was given; and hence it was, that for several ages they were continually corrupting it with the idolatrous practices of the neighbouring nations. The Christian dispensation, likewise, was not only superior to the degree of improvement to which the Jews had attained, but to that of the most intelligent parts of Greece and Rome. Hence, Christianity, almost at its very establishment, began to be corrupted by the traditions of the Jews, and the philosophy of the Gentiles, till its beauty and dignity were in a great measure lost. Nor can it escape observation, that all the learning and intelligence of the present day are able only in part to remove the load of corruptions that have overwhelmed it, or to induce men to receive it in its native purity, when exhibited to view. This circumstance, however, so far from being any impeachment of the wisdom of God, is a proof of it. Were men arrived at the utmost degree of perfection of which they are susceptible; or did God design that they should remain stationary; we might be certain, that what dispensation soever he should establish among them would be exactly balanced and adapted to their existing circumstances. But if the design of the Supreme Being be to lead his intelligent creation from one degree of perfection to another, the dispensation proper for that purpose, must, if I may so speak, advance before them, that it may incite them to follow in the path of improvement. This it could not do were it exactly adapted to the capacities of men at the time of its establishment; for if circumstances were thus exactly balanced, and if the people be supposed to advance at all, the dispensation must either be left behind,

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in which case it would be not merely useless, but hurtful ; or be altered by God every day to keep pace with the improvement of men, which would be equally hurtful. Hence it appears to me that the dispensations of Moses and of Christ rather anticipated, than exactly suited, the improvement and capacity of their respective votaries ; and what is no less wonderful, that both possessed a power of expanding themselves, if I may employ that expression, to meet the growing improvements of men, and especially the Christian dispensation, which, I imagine, has a mine of wisdom and knowledge contained in it, yet unexplored, and which will appear still more valuable and glorious as men become capable of appreciating and improving its hidden treasures.



## SECTION III.

*Of the Court and Tabernacle of the Jews.*

BEFORE I proceed to consider the import of the various sacrifices of the Mosaic economy, it will be necessary to offer some observations upon the court and tabernacle, where the various victims were presented before the Lord and slain. This, I apprehend, is necessary, not merely because the subject is involved in great obscurity by the interpretations of theologists, but because it will greatly facilitate the elucidation of the services performed in them; and will, perhaps in a manner much more surprising than the reader imagines, confirm not only the doctrines which I maintain, but even the dispensations of Moses and of Christ.

It is well known that the place of public worship among the Jews was divided into three parts. The first was the court, which surrounded the tabernacle properly so called; into which the whole congregation were admitted, and in which all their sacrifices were presented before the Lord. The tabernacle itself was divided into two parts, called in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the first and second tabernacles, of which the outmost was properly denominated "the holy place," into which the priests and Levites only entered; and where stood the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread, and the golden candlestick. The inmost recess, emphatically called "the most holy place," or "the holy of holies," was entered only by the high priest alone once every year; and contained the pot of manna, Aaron's



rod, the tables of the covenant, the mercy-seat, and the cherubim.

When we consider that the form and furniture of the whole fabric were represented by God himself to Moses; when we consider, too, the solemn injunction repeatedly delivered to him; "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it;" we shall perceive the reason of his long stay upon Mount Sinai, and be convinced that the whole was adjusted with the most consummate wisdom, and designed to answer the most important ends. That God should have taken all that care, if I may employ the expression, to form a structure of such a peculiar form, and such exquisite workmanship, for the sole purpose of delighting the eye, or amusing the fancy, will be admitted only by persons whose views of the conduct of the Supreme Being are very different from mine; and could I form no probable conjecture with respect to its moral and religious import, I should attribute this, not to the want of wisdom and design in the contriver, but to the ignorance and blindness of my own mind.

After having paid to this highly curious and instructive subject all the attention in my power, I am decidedly of opinion that the whole was designed by God to be symbolical of his church from the calling of Abraham to the end of the world; and that the different divisions, so particularly described, were contrived to represent in succession the different dispensations of revealed religion, of which each is exhibited as preparatory and introductory to the next in order; and the

whole as preparatory and introductory to the world to come.

Assuming this, then, as a point which I shall afterwards prove, it will at once appear, that the court of the tabernacle represented the church of God, or the state of religion in the patriarchal age, extending from the calling of Abraham to the giving of the law.—That the holy place, or as it is sometimes called, the first tabernacle, or the sanctuary, adumbrated the state of religion during the Mosaic economy, extending from the giving of the law to the death of Christ.—And that the most holy place, or as it is frequently denominated, the holiest of all, and the second tabernacle, was emblematical of the state of religion during the Christian dispensation, extending from the death of Christ to the end of the world.—As the state of religion in the patriarchal age, though clearly separated and distinguished from the world, was not so enclosed by the divine precept, so covered by the divine protection, and so consecrated by the divine presence, as it was after the giving of the law,\* it was with the greatest propriety represented by a court.—As the state of religion in the patriarchal age, and that under the Mosaic economy, were intimately connected, and bore a striking analogy to each other, insomuch that in one sense they might be looked upon as one and the same, the services of the court and of the holy place, though distinct and different, had a mutual relation and dependence upon each other, and were performed by the same people.—And as the state of religion, in the two last, was administered under the form of two covenants, to which nothing similar had ever taken place, it is

represented by two tabernacles, of which the one is not only clearly distinguished from the other, but both from the court.

In order that I may do justice to this interesting subject, it will be necessary to analyze the different apartments of this place of worship, and to shew the import of the principal symbols which they contained; but at the same time, to confine my remarks within some reasonable bounds, I must leave unexplained, to employ the ingenuity of the intelligent reader, many of those utensils which were of subordinate use and importance.

The court of the tabernacle was an oblong square, extending in length, from east to west, one hundred cubits; and in breadth, from north to south, fifty cubits. It is a remark, applicable not only to the court, but to all the divisions of the tabernacle, that as a square is constantly employed as the emblem of stability, this figure is admirably adapted to represent the church of God, which, though assailed on every hand, no created power shall ever overturn.—This court was enclosed on all sides but on the east, where was the only entrance into it; and, consequently, into the different apartments of the tabernacle. The import of this is evident. It was in the east where God at first laid the foundations of his church, when he called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees; and from the east, truth, the light of the moral world, like the sun in the natural world, has been gradually advancing towards the west, with increasing splendour, till its rays have illumined our mountains, and caused us to rejoice under their enlivening influence. Nor is it unworthy of

observation, that as the length of the court from east to west, which, it ought to be remembered, enclosed the tabernacle around, was double its breadth from north to south, so "the march of truth" has extended much more in the former direction than in the latter; and thus, the polar regions have not only been doomed to unyielding sterility from the absence of the natural sun, but what is still more, from the absence of the sun of righteousness.

But though the only entrance into the court was on the east, yet that side was not left exposed, but was confined by a curtain, or rather curtains, which are frequently in scripture called the first veil, and through which was the door. The word כַּתָּנִים, which Moses employs to denominate these curtains, is derived from the verb כָּתַב, which signifies "to carve," or "to engrave." Hence it has been asserted, that these hangings were a kind of net, or chain work, through which all that was done within could be seen from without. I imagine, however, that they were wrought like brocade, or damask cloth, on which various emblematic figures were represented; and if they were open, as has been said, we have only to suppose that they were wrought in such a manner as if the ground of the damask cloth was cut out, and the figures only left remaining. I suspect, however, that they had no openings, as the word which denominates them implies rather that the figures were raised on, or indented in, the cloth, than that the cloth was cut through. And as the Jews maintain that after the court and tabernacle were placed at Shiloh, they were surrounded by a wall of the same dimensions, it can hardly be supposed that this wall

could be built with such openings as would make the figures visible. I may add, that in the temple, which supplied the place of the tabernacle, a wall was substituted instead of these curtains, upon which the same figures would in all probability be portrayed. \*

That this court was the emblem of the church of God, from the calling of Abraham to the giving of the law, will appear from the following considerations. From amongst the heathen nations, which universally had lost sight of the first and most important article of all religion—the unity of God—and had sunk into the grossest polytheism and idolatry, the Almighty elected Abraham and his descendants, to preserve the knowledge of the unity of God in a world which, because it wished not to retain that knowledge, became ignorant of it, till, in the ages to come, that little leaven should leaven the whole lump. In reference to this, Moses thus addresses them, Deut. vii. 6: “Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.”—

A great number of their positive precepts, which have excited the ridicule and the contempt of the pretended philosopher, were appointed by the wisdom of God to mark this line of separation, and to preserve it unviolated when marked. Hence the court was admirably adapted to be the symbol of the church at that period. If we reason from analogy—our only guide when positive information is wanting—we shall conclude that the figured curtains exhibited the various animals and fruits which, in opposition to the impure sacrifices of idolatry, were offered to God, and which marked the

nature of that figurative or symbolical dispensation under which the Jews lived, and which separated them from the Gentiles around them. But whilst we are obliged to analogy for information respecting the figures on the curtains, we have positive information respecting the import of the curtains themselves. St. Paul (Ephes. ii. 14, 15) assures us, that they represented those positive rites and ceremonies which God enjoined the Jews to perform, in order to keep them distinct, and uncontaminated by the idolatrous nations. But, in consulting this passage, it ought to be remembered, that when the apostle wrote, the tabernacle was superseded by the temple, and that a wall was built to supply the place of these curtains. Hence the same language is applicable to both: "Wherefore remember," saith the apostle, "that ye, Gentiles, who were sometimes far off from God, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both (Jews and Gentiles) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition," or veil of partition, "between us" (Jews and Gentiles).—And what, according to Paul, did this wall, or veil of partition, signify? "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity," that is, the cause of enmity between the Jews and Gentiles, "even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain (Jews and Gentiles) one new man; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross."—Here, then, the wall, or veil of partition, which was adorned with emblematic figures, is said by the apostle to have been the symbol of those carnal ordinances which were appointed by God, to keep the Jews a separate people

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from the Gentiles, when he chose Abraham and his posterity. The whole chapter, laying aside inspiration altogether, is one of the most valuable documents of the history of the church in ancient times, and deserves the reader's most serious attention ; but when it is considered as the dictates of the Divine Spirit, it rises in dignity and importance, and fully proves the point at issue.

Within this court, two things, the brazen laver and the altar of burnt-offerings, particularly demand our consideration. It is not my intention, however, to describe minutely the form and magnitude of these sacred utensils, as this is done in the word of God, and as it is foreign to the nature of this inquiry, which is only to elucidate their moral import. The brazen laver was situated in the eastern end of the court, and immediately within its entrance. It served the important purpose of washing the hands and the feet of the priests, who, as a mark of reverence established by the custom of these times, officiated bare-foot, and who were forbidden in the most positive manner to engage in any part of their ministry without previous ablution. It likewise supplied water for washing the legs and entrails of the animals which were slain and offered upon the altar of burnt-offerings. Now, the moral import of this sacred symbol cannot escape observation. Water is repeatedly mentioned in scripture as the emblem of those means which the Spirit of God employs in order to accomplish our sanctification. As the body, therefore, is washed from pollution by water, so is the soul by the Spirit of God. Hence the laver taught the Israelites the same important truth which baptism, to

which the apostle compares it, teaches Christians,—that the very first thing which is required of those who enter the court of God's house, is repentance, the beginning of sanctification. This is so clearly expressed by the apostle in the places just now alluded to, that I cannot refrain from transcribing his words. Ephes. v. 25, 26: "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." And again, Titus iii. 5, 6: "Not by works of righteousness which we *had* done,"—previous to the coming of Christ, for from the context it appears that works of righteousness were out of the question,—“but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.”—Here the language of Paul is as applicable to the Jewish laver as to Christian baptism, and proves that both were symbols of one and the same thing, emphatically denominated *regeneration*. But regeneration is nothing else but the beginning of sanctification, of the death of sin, which must be effected before we can even begin a life of righteousness. The symbol itself, and the place where it was situated at the very door of the court, were chosen, with the most consummate wisdom, to convey to the minds of an ignorant and rude people the important truth, “that without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”

In the eastern end of the court likewise, but at a little greater distance from the door, stood the altar of burnt-offerings. It was formed of shittim, or *incorruptible* wood, covered over with a strong plate of brass, and had at its corners four horns of the same



metal, to which the victims were bound when about to be slain. It is particularly deserving of notice, that nothing which in any manner whatever was polluted, was allowed to be presented or burnt upon this, or indeed upon any, altar. Neither the sin-offering, nor the trespass-offering, was ever permitted to touch it: for those parts of the sin-offering, and of the trespass-offering, which were really consumed upon it, were not only separated from these sacrifices, but assumed a different character. Hence they became burnt-offerings, as the name which was given to them proves, and were employed as symbols of the same thing—a circumstance contrived, as I shall afterwards shew, with the greatest wisdom, to accomplish a most important purpose. It is necessary to add, that no common or unhallowed fire was allowed to be kindled upon this, or upon any other, altar. The fire which consumed the victims offered upon it, descended from heaven for that express purpose, and was enjoined to be kept alive through all succeeding generations.

The altar of burnt-offerings, like every other altar, was the symbol of the heart of the offerer, who had previously washed himself from the pollution of sin in the laver of sanctification. The victims, or offerings, presented upon it, were the symbols of those virtuous actions which he who devoted himself to the service of God daily performed, and in which consisted his justification. From a heart, therefore, inspired with heavenly ardour, and glowing with divine affections, ascended these sacrifices of righteousness as a sweet savour unto God. That earthly zeal, that uncharitable heat, which are kindled at the unhallowed fires of hell, inflame the

heart of the hypocrite, the bigot, and the profane, and are fit only for the blood-stained altars of superstition and idolatry. Affections and passions thus kindled, to use the expression of the apostle, "work not the righteousness of God."

This symbol was chosen, with the greatest propriety to adumbrate the thing signified, and thus to prove indirectly the interpretation here given. As a man must first "cease to do evil" before he "learn to do well," must first "die unto sin" before he can "live unto righteousness," it was absolutely necessary that the brazen laver, the emblem of the former, should be placed nearer to the entrance of the court than the altar of burnt-offerings, the emblem of the latter. But as sanctification naturally leads to justification—as sanctification, in short, may be said to be the first step in the way of God, and justification the second—the brazen altar stood, in a straight line with the laver, a very little further from the door. I cannot but add, that as the measure of holiness and righteousness to which men attained in the patriarchal age, suited to their state and privileges, was small in comparison to what they were afterward, these symbols were made of brass, strong and durable, but not so pure and valuable as the symbols placed in the two apartments of the tabernacle.

Now, as the separation of the Israelites from the nations of the world, before the giving of the law, was not nearly so complete as it was afterwards, I am convinced the reader will acknowledge that their situation was admirably represented by this court. The truth is, their separation *then* was more properly of a civil

than of a religious nature. They had then no consecrated priesthood, no stated times or place of public worship, and no written revelation from God. Here, then—into this court—all the Israelites, without exception, were admitted. Here, then, in all their secular employments, in all their intercourse with one another, were they to wash in the laver of regeneration, to avoid all sin and wickedness; were they to offer up themselves upon the brazen altar as holy and acceptable sacrifices—to cultivate truth and righteousness, and to enjoy that peace and happiness which result from a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. This was information of the greatest importance to their dignity and happiness—information which, though possible to be known in every age, has been too little attended to; since men have ever been backward to believe that the principal part of the service of God, that the principal part of their preparation for heaven, is accomplished in their intercourse with one another, and in the common employments of life.

Let us now turn our attention to the tabernacle. The tabernacle, properly so called, was an oblong square, extending from east to west, thirty cubits in length, and ten cubits in breadth. It was situated towards the western end of the court, and was divided into two apartments by a veil of curious workmanship, adorned with figures of symbolical import, hung upon a row of four columns of shittim wood, overlaid with the purest gold, and fixed in pedestals of massive silver. I have already said that the eastern division of the tabernacle, commonly called the sanctuary, or the holy place, was appointed to be the symbol of the church

of God from the giving of the law to the death of Christ. As it was at the commencement of this period that the elements of divine service among the Israelites were augmented and adjusted by divine wisdom, and obtained that beautiful order, and mutual dependence upon each other, which gave consistency and effect to the whole—as it was at the commencement of this period that a perpetual priesthood was established; consecrated, not only to perform the public services of religion, but upon stated occasions to instruct their brethren in all the doctrines and precepts of divine truth—as it was at the commencement of this period, in short, that God communicated to man a written revelation of his will, in all its various branches, to be transmitted to future generations—upon all these accounts, it became highly necessary, not only that a new symbol of this period should be instituted, but that it should be enclosed with greater care, should be revered with greater sanctity, and should contain within its sacred enclosure new symbols, expressive of the new privileges which the church of God now enjoyed. Should it be found that the furniture and service of the holy place were contrived and appointed with an evident reference to this new state of things, the doctrine I maintain may be considered as established.

In this apartment, which was situated at a proper distance from the altar of burnt-offerings, were placed, by the command of God, the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread, and the golden candlestick, with several other inferior utensils, which, as they belonged only to the service of those symbols that were of primary im-

portance, will not require a particular discussion. As these primary symbols have, I am afraid, been much misunderstood, and as their elucidation will not only illustrate and confirm the subject of this Essay, but throw considerable light upon the word of God, I beg leave to bestow upon them some attention.

The altar of incense, called also, from its external appearance, the golden altar, was formed of shittim wood, and was overlaid with pure gold. It was a perfect square of one cubit, and was two cubits in height, adorned on the top with a golden border or crown, which surrounded it; and from its four corners rose four horns of pure gold. Upon this altar, incense, prepared in a particular manner according to an express commandment, and forbidden to be employed for any other purpose, was enjoined to be burnt every morning and evening, as well as upon other occasions on their stated festivals. The import of this expressive symbol cannot be misunderstood. The altar, according to the interpretation formerly given, represented the heart of the worshipper, glowing with that heavenly affection that gives itself utterance in prayer and adoration. It was covered with pure gold, a metal much more precious than brass, to denote, not only that the privileges of the Mosaic economy were superior to those of the age that went before, but also, that when we appear in the more immediate presence of God, and hold communion with the Most High, the heart, in a peculiar manner, ought to be purified and sublimed from those thoughts and desires which, though proper and necessary in the common business of life, would be altogether foreign from the sanctity of that solemn service.

The crown with which it was surrounded, was the symbol of the honour and dignity with which the proper performance of this exalted and ennobling exercise adorns the good; and the horns which were upon its four corners denoted the power and prevalence of that “effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous, which avail-eth much.” It was placed in the sanctuary, not because prayer was never before performed, but because no stated times and seasons for the performance of this duty had formerly been instituted; because no regular priesthood had been formerly appointed to be the mouth of the people, and to lead their devotions; and because it is probable that no symbol expressive of prayer had been formerly introduced.

That incense, during the Mosaic economy, was the symbol of prayer, in the most extensive sense of that word, will, I apprehend, be disputed by none. In Rev. v. 5, the odours, or sweet incense, which ascended from the golden censers in the hands of the elders, are denominated the prayers of the saints; and in chap. viii. 3, 4, of the same book, an angel is represented as having a golden censer, full of much incense, which he was to offer up with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar:—no doubt representing in this hieroglyphic manner some particular event, brought about, at the period to which this prophecy refers, either by persons or circumstances, which would in a very forcible way excite the followers of Jesus to prayer and supplication. Nor is it an unnecessary observation, that the emblematic nature of the Book of Revelation greatly strengthens the evidence of this interpretation. As it is the nature of this prophecy to represent real

actions and events by expressive symbols, we may be certain that the Spirit of God would employ such as had been formerly appropriated to similar purposes, and which, from that circumstance, would be easily understood, in order that these, when recognized, might serve as a key to open and disclose such as had been newly adopted.

There is a fact recorded, Luke i. 8—10, which is not only curious in itself, but is of singular importance upon the point in question. The plain and unadorned narrative of the historian informs us, “that while Zacharias executed the priests’ office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priests’ office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord, and the whole people were praying without at the time of incense.” Here, then, we have not only a proof that the offering up of incense adumbrated the offering up of prayer; but, what is of still more importance, we have an example of the moral influence which the performance of the works of the law had to lead the Jews to the performance of the righteousness of the law—an example of the way in which external ceremonies gave vigour and energy to the faith of a rude and ignorant people.

When, therefore, fragrant incense, kindled by sacred fire, ascended up to heaven from an altar of pure gold, must not the Jew have been powerfully stimulated to offer up the devout breathings of prayer and adoration from a pure heart glowing with that ardent affection which has its origin, not in earth, but in heaven? And when God, in condescension to the weakness of men, and according to the nature of that dispensation, was

said to smell as a sweet savour the odour of his incense, must not his worshipper have been incited to cherish the animating hope that his Almighty Father would graciously vouchsafe to accept of his adoration, and bless him with his protection and love? The man who cannot see the beauty, the fitness of the sign to adumbrate the thing signified, will have no reason to wonder at the ignorance and coldness which the understandings and hearts of the Jews discovered in ancient times.

The table of shew-bread now demands our attention. It was also made of shittim wood, overlaid with pure gold; and was surrounded at the top with a rim or crown of the same metal. From Levit. xxiv. 5—9, we learn, that the priests were to bring, on the morning of every sabbath, twelve loaves, made of the finest wheat; and, having removed the old ones, to place them in order, in two rows, six in each, upon one another. They were to be entirely free from leaven; and along with them, a handful of the best frankincense, in a vessel of pure gold, and some salt, were to be presented. The incense and the salt, with a certain portion of the bread, were to be burnt every sabbath, as an offering made by fire unto the Lord. The remainder of the bread was to be eaten by the priests only.

It is evident, that during the Mosaic economy, bread was employed as the symbol of instruction in every thing that pertained to morals and religion. Nor is it difficult to perceive the analogy which the sign bears to the thing signified. As bread nourishes and strengthens the body, to fit it for temporal employments, so instruc-



tion nourishes and strengthens the soul, to fit it for spiritual employments; and as the former by being incorporated with the body enlarges its members, so the latter by being incorporated with the soul enlarges its powers. No symbol, I apprehend, could have been selected from the objects of sense so proper for exhibiting to the Jews this glorious privilege, than a table constantly furnished for their sustenance. And as it is evident that no mode of public instruction was instituted till after the giving of the law, when a regular priesthood was ordained, the symbol appointed to adumbrate this was with the greatest propriety placed in the first tabernacle.

But as bread when corrupted and unwholesome, destroys the health, if not the life of the body, which it was designed to preserve; so doctrine when corrupted and unwholesome, destroys the health, if not the life of the soul, which it ought to support. It is from this circumstance, that unleavened bread is employed as the symbol of doctrines which are of God, and which tend to cherish purity and righteousness; and that leavened bread is the symbol of doctrines which are of men, and which tend to corrupt the heart and conduct. The aptitude of these signs to adumbrate the things signified, must be sought for in the names and qualities of the signs themselves.

The word *חַמֵּץ*, which, when employed on this subject, is rendered *unleavened*, signifies "to press," "to wring," "to squeeze." It is therefore applied to bread which, as it is not suffered to ferment, has all its parts closely compressed together, and is baked perfectly sweet and incorrupted. From the former quality, that its parts

are closely compressed together, it is denominated, (Deut. xvi. 3,) "bread of affliction," and was enjoined to be eaten by the Israelites in the passover, to remind them, that in Egypt, their bodies were oppressed with toil, and their souls wrung with sorrow. And as that house of bondage was a school of discipline, it represented to them those instructive lessons which affliction is designed to teach. From the latter quality, that it is sweet and incorrupted, is it applied with the greatest propriety to that doctrine or instruction which promotes the health of the soul, and nourishes it in truth and virtue.

Further, the word *זמח*, which is rendered *leaven*, signifies "to ferment": and as those substances which undergo a process of fermentation, become sour, acid, [acid,] and putrid, it is analogically applied to leaven, which, in proportion to the time in which it is allowed to ferment, acquires these qualities. From these circumstances, leaven is employed as the symbol of such doctrines as are either wholly corrupted and false; or such as, being blended and fermented by the yeast of human invention, to use that expression, sour the temper, corrupt the heart, and vitiate the conduct.

In proof of these remarks, I would remind the reader of an instructive event in the history of our Lord. His disciples, we are told upon one occasion, (Matt. xvi. 5, 6,) having forgotten to take bread with them, received from their Master this injunction, "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." His disciples, more attentive to the letter than to the spirit of his discourse, "reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread."

Jesus perceiving their error, and reproofing them in such a manner as to direct their attention beyond the symbol to the reality, the historian adds, "Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees." The leaven of the Pharisees was the doctrine which, instead of placing religion in purity of heart and rectitude of conduct, made it consist in the performance of external ceremonies: the leaven of the Sadducees was the doctrine which denied a future state of rewards and punishments.

The words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, ought not to be omitted when explaining this subject: "Purge out," says he, "the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened; for even Christ our pass-over, is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." It is evident that the old leaven which they were to purge out, were those impure doctrines, enjoined by their 'old idolatrous superstitions, and which led them to conduct similar to that of the incestuous person; and that the leaven of malice and wickedness, was that doctrine which maintained the propriety of separating themselves into different sects, under different leaders, which always engenders malice, and terminates in wickedness. On the other hand, the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, which was to make them a new lump, was the sincere truth of the gospel, newly revealed to them by God, and pure and unmixed with the commandments of men, which induced them not only to cultivate truth and sincerity,

but to become new men, by new obedience to every moral precept. Upon this subject, the inquisitive reader ought to consult 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2, Heb. v. 14, &c., 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

Let us now apply these remarks to the subject under consideration. The table of shew-bread, formed of incorruptible wood, and overlaid with gold, adumbrated the priesthood,—the teachers of morality and religion, who are appointed by God to shew forth, from a pure heart and incorrupted mind, the great doctrines of religion—the bread of life which is to nourish the souls of the people. The twelve loaves, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, denoted that as instruction is necessary for all, so it is prepared for all; that in their father's house there is “bread enough and to spare” for his intelligent children. As these loaves were renewed every sabbath, and set in order by the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary were instructed, that on the day set apart for the solemn services of religion, “they should bring forth from their treasures things new, as well as things old, for the nourishment of the saints;” and that these instructions may have a proper effect upon their hearers, the truths which they deliver ought to be properly arranged, and disposed in regular succession, and with a mutual dependence upon each other. And as the priests' lips were to “keep wisdom,” the people were likewise instructed, by this emblem, never to “neglect,” on the sabbath of the Lord their God, “the assembling of themselves together” in his sanctuary; but with “souls hungering and thirsting after righteousness,” to come “to receive their portion of meat in due season.”

Another circumstance connected with this subject ought to be mentioned. From the passage lately alluded to, we find, that upon the shew-bread was put a handful of the best frankincense, in a vessel of pure gold, which was to be burnt at the conclusion of every week, as an offering made by fire unto the Lord. It is impossible not to see the import of this expressive emblem. Could any action be better adapted to convey to the carnal minds of a rude people, the important lesson, that every mode of instruction ought to be accompanied with fervent prayer to God, that he would bless the bread of life to the nourishment of their souls; and that, when they grow in purity and righteousness, their gratitude ought to ascend up before the Most High, by whom are imparted all the treasures of knowledge and goodness?

As remarks of this kind not only elucidate the subject of the present inquiry, but explain the word of God, and tend to lead us, who enjoy a nobler dispensation, to the love and practice of virtue, I cannot omit another circumstance intimately connected with the table of shew-bread. It is well known, that salt was enjoined to be always presented along with the shew-bread; and that, under the law, salt was employed as the emblem of love or charity. Nor is it difficult to perceive why it was chosen for this purpose. As salt preserves from corruption those subjects to which it is applied, so love or charity can alone preserve from moral corruption the heart and conduct of every man. In allusion to this, our Lord says to his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth," who by your love and benevolence in imparting religious instruction—the bread

of life—shall preserve the world from universal corruption. And again, “Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another”;—display that kindness and charity in your conduct, which will conciliate the affections of all, and preserve you in peace and unity. The same metaphor is employed by St. Paul: (Col. iv. 5, 6:) “Walk in wisdom towards them that are without; redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace or kindness seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every one.” When the meaning of this symbol is thus ascertained, the propriety of the following injunction must be manifest. Lev. ii. 13: “Every oblation of thy meat (Heb. *bread*, or *flour*) offering, shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of the Lord to be lacking from thy bread-offering: with all thy offerings—of this kind—thou shalt offer salt.” Thus, the Israelites were informed, in the most striking manner, that the greatest kindness and benevolence ought to direct every step of their moral and religious conduct; and thus, the ministers of religion in particular were taught, that it was their duty, in no common degree, to cultivate the charity and mutual forbearance that “cometh down from the Father of Lights,” in explaining the doctrines and enforcing the precepts of religion, and in choosing the most proper opportunities, the most effectual modes of communicating instruction, in order to preserve themselves and others from the corrupt maxims and manners of the world.

The candlestick, which was by far the most valuable and highly finished symbol in the sanctuary, still remains to be considered. It was formed without any

joint or solder, of one solid piece of pure gold. From its stalk, which rose above its pedestal or foot, six branches expanded around, which with a seventh in the middle, were curiously adorned with cups, knobs, and flowers, resembling the fruit, the buds, and the blossoms of the almond tree; and on the top of each was placed a lamp of pure gold, shaped also like an almond. These, according to the ritual, were to be supplied with the purest oil of olives, and were evidently designed to give light to the holy place.

From the nature of the symbol itself, as well as from many intimations in scripture, it appears to me evident, that it represented the various operations of the Spirit of God in the Jewish church, especially by giving it a succession of prophets, from whom the beams of revelation continually emanated as a light shining in a dark place. Of this import of the lamps, which the candlestick supported, we have clear intimation given us in scripture. When God, for instance, threatens to remove his candlestick from the church at Ephesus, (Rev. ii. 5,) his meaning must be, that he would allow the light of revelation to be extinguished among them, as they were altogether unworthy of it—as “they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” Again, David, who certainly knew the meaning and import of the symbols of the sanctuary, says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” And Solomon with equal clearness declares, (Prov. vi. 23,) that “the commandment is a lamp and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.” That the whole should be formed of the purest gold will not surprise us, when we recol-

lect, "That the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; that the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; that the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold." These lamps were שבע, *seven*, a term derived from שבע, which signifies "perfection," "sufficiency," "completion;" probably, because the creation was completely formed, and perfectly arranged, in the period of seven days. Hence this number became sacred in the writings of the Jews, and is applied to this very subject by John, when he speaks of the seven spirits of God; denoting by that number the various modes of operation, in which the Holy Spirit exerts himself, to perfect the saints, and to complete their happiness. They all rose from one stalk, to denote, that though there were diversities of gifts, there was but one Spirit. And they were beaten out of one solid piece of gold, without joints or solder, to mark the exact agreement, the inseparable connexion, and the intimate dependence which there is, and must be, among the truths of revelation.

When the Almighty, (Exod. xxv. 40,) describes the various utensils of the sanctuary, and in particular, the golden candlestick, he says to Moses, "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." From such a strict charge, it appears certain, that every circumstance was designed to be significative. That the flowers, the knobs, the bowls, and the lamps of this sacred symbol, therefore, should all have resembled the blossoms, the buds, and the fruit of the almond tree, without a sufficient reason, cannot be admitted. It is a curious fact, that when



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God consecrated Jeremiah to be a lamp in the house of Judah, we are told, (Jer. i. 11, 12,) that “the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And he said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said the Lord unto him, Thou hast well seen; for I will hasten (Heb. *am hastening*) my word to perform it.” Blayney’s Note on this passage will explain the symbol,—“The almond tree is one of the first trees that blossom in the spring, and from that circumstance is supposed to have received its name, as being intent, and as it were on the watch to seize the first opportunity; which is the proper sense of the Hebrew verb. So that here is at once an allusion to the property of the almond tree, and in the original a *paranomasia*; which makes it more striking there than it can be in a translation.” By this symbol, then, the Almighty intimated to Jeremiah, that he would constantly be, as it were, upon the watch to hasten the performance of his word, “that it might not return unto him void, that it might accomplish that which he pleased, and prosper in the thing whereto he sent it.”—This passage, therefore, ascertains the meaning of this symbol, and shews the propriety of forming the ornaments of the candlestick and the lamp like almonds.

Nor can it be forgotten, that in scripture, oil is constantly employed as the emblem of the influence of the Divine Spirit. Hence, says St. Peter, (Acts x. 38,) “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit.” And as the Holy Spirit, in order to animate the righteous to endure all the calamities to which life is heir, pours into their souls “that peace which passeth all understanding,” “that joy which is unspeakable

and full of glory," the symbol which at first adumbrated the cause, was soon also employed to adumbrate the effect. In consistency with this use of the figure, the writer to the Hebrews thus addresses our Lord: "Gód, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." And our Saviour himself thus speaks, (Isaiah lxi. 1, 3,) "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord anointed me to preach glad-tidings to the meek; to give—beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning."—Hence, though the Jews were accustomed daily to anoint themselves, yet in times of grief and calamity, oil was not used by them. This, too, suggests the reason why oil was employed in all sacrifices, but such as had a reference to sin;—for as I shall afterwards shew, those that had a respect to righteousness, or to the effect of righteousness, were attended with joy, but those that had a respect to sin, with equal propriety, were attended with sorrow.—Nor is it unworthy of notice, that the oil which was poured upon the heads of prophets, of priests, and of kings, was employed symbolically to denote that Divine Spirit which inspired them with powers and abilities to discharge the important duties of their respective offices.

Having made these remarks, we can be at no loss to perceive the reason why this symbol was placed in the holy place. I formerly said, that before the giving of the law, the separation of the Israelites from the Heathen was as much of a civil as of a religious nature. Hence, it was at Mount Sinai that they were properly formed into a church, and at that period commenced the light of revelation, which not only illumined them

in all the succeeding ages of that economy, but continues still to lighten and rejoice the nations.—In the first tabernacle, therefore, as its greatest ornament, was placed the symbol of its greatest privilege—a symbol which distinguished the Jews not only from all the nations who were sunk in idolatry, but from the church of God in former ages—a symbol which continually called upon that highly-favoured people to meditate upon the glorious advantages which they possessed, the influence which these advantages ought to have upon their conduct, and the gratitude with which they ought to inspire their hearts.

Another circumstance deserves here to be mentioned. It is well known that in ancient times, the first-born officiated as the priest of the family. But instead of the first-born amongst the Israelites, the Levites were chosen by God, to minister in holy things, and to stand as the representatives of the whole people. Not only the priests, therefore, who were of the family of Aâron, but the Levites, were admitted into the holy place to perform the service of the sanctuary; and their service was accepted, instead of the service which the whole house of Israel owed to God. As the Israelites, therefore, were admitted into the court only, this taught them that though it was their duty and interest to worship God as private members of his church, and to cultivate purity and righteousness in all their transactions with one another; yet they were not to intrude themselves into the sacred offices of the peculiar servants of God; who were separated from every secular employment, who were devoted to the solemn duties of religious worship, and who, from their superior sanc-

tity and continual meditation upon divine things, might be supposed to know more perfectly the rites and ceremonies of the sanctuary, and the purity and righteousness of the law of God.

Here then, in the first tabernacle, the symbol of the Jewish church, after the giving of the law, stood the altar of incense, as the emblem of the public prayers, which, morning and evening, were to ascend from every heart, to the Source of every Blessing, and the Standard of all Perfection.—Here, too, was placed the table of shew-bread, the emblem of that instruction which the ministers of religion were to communicate to the people, in order to nourish their souls and strengthen their faculties for the proper performance of every duty.—And here stood the golden candlestick, the representative of their church, crowned with the lamp of revelation, to guide them, as a light shining in a dark place, in the way to the mansions of immortality.

What has been here advanced respecting the court of the tabernacle and the holy place, will receive full confirmation from the consideration that the second tabernacle, or as it is often called, the holiest of all, or the most holy place, was the symbol of the Christian dispensation. I am sensible, that all the commentators which I have seen, whatever be their particular opinions on other subjects, are hostile to this doctrine, and maintain, that nothing is more evident from scripture than that the most holy place was the symbol of heaven. As this is a question, not only of great curiosity, but of great importance, I shall consider it at some length, and endeavour to collect all the light which the Scriptures afford us respecting its symbolical import.

Before I enter upon the description of this apartment of the tabernacle, it will be necessary to remark, that though the Christian dispensation possesses, besides those privileges which are peculiar to it, all the privileges of the Mosaic dispensation, yet it is not necessary that the symbol of the Christian dispensation should contain representations of these privileges, as they were represented by the symbol of the Mosaic economy, under which they were at first introduced, and to which therefore they peculiarly belonged. All that the symbol of the Christian dispensation could with propriety contain, were the signs of those things which were not known before, and which therefore it could claim as its own. The same mode of proceeding God had adopted from the beginning. In the court were placed the laver and the altar of burnt-offerings, as signs of the sanctification and the justification of the worshippers before the giving of the law. But though sanctification and justification were accomplished, and accomplished much more perfectly under the law, yet they had no new symbols in the holy place. In the same manner, though the Christian dispensation was supplied with a far clearer revelation, was instructed in a sublimer doctrine, and was enabled to raise, in more exalted strains, the prayer of adoration and gratitude, yet, still as these were adumbrated in the first tabernacle, no new symbols of them were appointed in the second. The reason of this, though obvious enough already, will appear still more clearly as we proceed.

The western division of the tabernacle, or the holy of holies, was contemplated, as the name imports, with greater awe and veneration than any other part of that

consecrated edifice. Indeed, every division rises in dignity and importance, proportioned to the different degrees of purity and righteousness, which each successive dispensation of religion was calculated to produce. This is a strong presumption at least, of the truth of my interpretation; as upon any other, the Christian dispensation would be entirely overlooked; whereas, in a symbolical dispensation, such as the Mosaic was, it appears as proper to look forward to what was to come, as backward to what event before.

The sacred utensils which were placed in the holy of holies were few. Besides the ark of the covenant with its cover or lid, which was by far the most important symbol of the whole, it contained only Aaron's rod and the pot of manna. I do not mention the golden censer, which is spoken of by the writer to the Hebrews, (ix. 4,) because though it was employed once every year in the service of the most holy place, and upon that account is represented in that passage, properly enough, as pertaining to it, yet I imagine, it was not kept there, but in the holy place, where it undoubtedly was frequently employed in sacred services. —Though I imagine strong reasons might be brought, in support of this opinion, yet it appears so unimportant, that I will not detain the reader any longer than to mention it.

It will not be necessary to enter minutely into the circumstances which rendered it proper to deposit Aaron's rod in the most holy place. We are told that it was preserved there as a token or witness against those persons who murmured and rebelled, because Aaron and the Levites were appointed by God to exe-

cute the priests' office, and to minister in holy things. To preserve it in that place, which was the symbol of the Christian dispensation, was, I apprehend, highly proper, as it must have served two important purposes.

In the first place, it taught the Jews, in the strongest manner, that they ought to beware of murmuring and rebelling against the high-priest of the gospel dispensation, and against those ministers who under him were employed in the service of God. They ought to have remembered, whenever they meditated upon the furniture of the most holy place, that the same objections and the same rebellion, which had been raised against the election of God in the first covenant, might again be dreaded in similar circumstances, while men's ignorance, and prejudice, and wickedness, remained the same.—By warning the Jews therefore, in every age, but especially in the age of our Saviour, to shun the rock upon which their fathers fell, this important symbol informed them, that “when Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together against the holy,” or the consecrated “Jesus,” they were actuated by the spirit, and imitated the conduct of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, “who gathered themselves together, with certain of the children of Israel, against Moses and against Aaron, and said, Ye take too much upon you:—Wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?”

But, secondly, this symbol must have inspired the great high-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, and his apostles, with faith and patience, with constancy and courage, with trust and confidence, to brave, in the discharge of their high ministry, the reproach of the

world, and the persecution of the wicked. It was a sacred deposit which reminded them of years that were long since passed, when others, who like themselves were appointed by God to discharge the same important offices, were despised, and vilified, and persecuted, by their brethren. It reminded them, likewise, that as Aaron's rod budded, and yielded almonds, not only as the signal of divine approbation and protection, but as a signal that the Lord would speedily accomplish the words of his ministers, at the commencement of the Mosaic economy; so the Lord would watch over his chosen, would arise early in their defence, and would not suffer the words of eternal life, which he had commanded his Son and his apostles to publish, to fall to the ground, at the commencement of the Christian economy.

To discover the import of the pot of manna, which was likewise placed in the second tabernacle, will, I apprehend, be no difficult task. It ought to be remembered that when the Almighty, by Moses, the redeemer of Israel, as Stephën calls him, had delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, and was conducting them to the promised land, they came to the wilderness of Sin. Afraid of the privations and dangers which there presented themselves, their dastardly minds sunk within them, they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, "Would God that we had died—continued till death—in Egypt, where we sat by the flesh pots and did eat bread to the full."—To supply their wants, manna was sent by God; and we are told, that it continued with them till they came to the borders of the promised land, and did eat the old corn of the



country. Of this manna, by the express command of God, an omer was put into a vessel of pure gold, and was laid up before the Lord in the most holy place, "to be kept," as Moses informs us, "through their generations, that they might see the bread wherewith the Lord fed them in the Wilderness."

That the manna was the symbol of our Saviour's doctrine, is evident from his own words, as we have them recorded in the sixth chapter of John. That a portion of it, therefore, should be laid up in that place, which adumbrated his dispensation, was in the highest degree proper; and that it was calculated to give the Jews information of the greatest importance, must at once be perceived. Whilst in the holy place, the shew-bread, formed of fine flour, pointed out to them the wholesome instructions which were to nourish their souls during the Mosaic economy; the manna which descended from heaven, and which was preserved in the most holy place, informed them, that when "God should raise up to them from amongst their brethren a prophet like unto Moses," he would bestow upon them instruction still more valuable, and that therefore it would be their duty and interest "to hear him in all things."

It is curious, and it will be profitable, to observe the analogy which there is between the sign and the thing signified; and how exactly they correspond, — God delivered the Israelites, by Moses, from the temporal bondage of Pharaoh; God delivered the Christians, by Jesus, from the spiritual bondage of sin, — The manna descended from heaven to sustain the temporal life of the former, during their journey in the Wilderness of

Sinai; the doctrine of Christ descended from heaven to sustain the spiritual life of the latter, during their journey through the wilderness of this world.—Many of the Israelites despised the manna as light food, and wished to return to the bondage of Egypt; many of the Christians despised the doctrine of Jesus, as too spiritual and refined, and wished to return to the bondage of the law and its fleshly ordinances.—The manna continued with the former during all their wanderings, till they arrived at the promised land, and did eat the corn of that country; the doctrine of Jesus continues with the latter during all their wanderings, till they arrive at the promised land, and enjoy instruction still more perfect.—The manna was sufficient for all the Israelites—to each of whom the same portion was dealt out without any respect of persons; the doctrine of Jesus is sufficient for all Christians—to each of whom, with the greatest impartiality, are given the same knowledge, the same precepts, the same hopes, and the same assistance. Nothing more, I apprehend, will be necessary to shew the propriety of preserving in that place, which was the symbol of the gospel dispensation, a portion of that heavenly food which adumbrated the doctrine of Jesus, the bread of life, which the gospel could alone supply.

The ark of the covenant, which now demands our attention, is allowed by all writers, whether Jews or Christians, to have been by far the most sacred of all the utensils of the most holy place. Indeed, so far do the Jews carry this, that they maintain, that it was chiefly with a respect to it, that the court, and the whole tabernacle, and all their furniture, were con-

structed. Nor can this be easily denied : like the sun, it was the centre of their religious symbols ; and whilst the others borrowed from it their utility and splendour, they reflected back upon it the honour and dignity which they had received.

The nature of the thing itself, as well as many declarations of scripture, sufficiently proves, that the eternal laws of moral rectitude were the only part of the Mosaic economy which had any intrinsic excellence, and that to promote obedience to them, all its ceremonies were enjoined. These laws, therefore, were delivered to the Israelites with circumstances of awful grandeur and solemnity, and were engraven by God upon tables of stone which his hands had formed for that express purpose. To preserve these tables, as containing an epitome of moral goodness to the Israelites, through their generations, the Almighty commanded them to make an ark of peculiar construction and of exquisite workmanship, to overlay it within and without with the purest gold, and to deposit in its sacred recess the eternal monuments of his will.

Whoever considers the nature of the Christian economy, will at once perceive that in a place designed to adumbrate it, the ark of the testimony must have been lodged. All the ceremonies of the old dispensation, every thing, in short, but moral goodness, was laid aside in the religion of Jesus. God then appeared as a Spirit, and those who were to worship him, were to worship him in spirit : God then appeared as the Father of all, and the God of the universe ; all his children, therefore, were to be admitted into his presence, and all space was to be consecrated as the temple where he

was to be adored. Men were "to enter into life by keeping the commandments;" the commandments, therefore, were to be exhibited in all their importance and in all their power. Hence nothing could be so descriptive of the religion of Jesus as this symbol, which deservedly occupied the most sacred place of that venerable edifice, which attracted to itself all the attention and affection of the worshipper, and which enjoined him, under the most awful sanctions, to reverence and to obey his Creator and God.

The covering or lid of the ark, called in our translation the mercy-seat, is a symbol which requires the minutest attention. It was formed of the purest gold, corresponding exactly in shape and magnitude to the dimensions of the ark, and was surrounded by a border or crown of the same metal. Two cherubic figures, whose exact form and features I have already endeavoured to describe, rose in gold from the two ends of this covering; and whilst they stretched forth their wings on high, to surround and to overshadow the whole circumference, they bent their faces downwards, contemplating with solemn reverence the covering and the ark of the testimony, as if they had been stationed to be the awful guardians of the law which was deposited within it.

It must not be omitted, that above the covering of the ark, and between the cherubim, rested the cloud of glory, or the Shechinah, which, it is universally allowed, was the awful symbol of the divine presence, and from the midst of which the Eternal delivered his gracious messages to that people. "There," says the Lord to Moses, "There will I meet with thee, and I

will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim, which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."—Now, that this really took place, we are certain; for when the sanctuary was finished, and the altar consecrated to the service of God, (Numb. vii. 8, 9,) "Moses went into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him—God.—Then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim."

Now, if the most holy place was the symbol of the Christian dispensation, as I have in some manner shewn, it follows that there must be in that dispensation some great reality to correspond to this expressive emblem. What that is, I shall now endeavour to explain. The least attention to the subject will convince us, that the cover of the ark and the cherubim were all formed of one solid piece of pure gold. The words of Moses, (Exod. xxv. 18, 19,) are perfectly explicit. I use the translation of Parkhurst: "Thou shalt make two cherubs: of beaten gold shalt thou make them at the two ends of the mercy-seat. And thou shalt make one cherub at the one end, and the other cherub at the other end: out of the mercy-seat (margin Eng. transl., of the *matter* of the mercy-seat) shall ye make the cherubs at the two ends thereof." As they were formed of one solid piece of metal, it follows that they must have composed only one symbol, and hence this symbol could have only one reality. Still, however, as this symbol was complex in its appearance, consist-

ing of the cover of the ark and the cherubs united, it is but natural to expect that the reality which it adumbrated should in some measure correspond to it in its end and design.

In my Essay upon Original Sin, I endeavoured fully to elucidate the meaning and import of the cherubim. Referring the reader to what was there advanced upon this curious and interesting subject, I shall only at present shew that this symbol, as here employed, is in perfect consistency with the conclusion which was there established. That conclusion was, that the cherubim were the symbol of the ministers of religion—of those men whom Providence has raised up in every age to maintain the unity of the Supreme Being, the spirituality of his worship, and the honour of his laws. The great reality, then, which in the present instance the cherubim were designed to adumbrate, appears to be our Saviour, the great Messenger of God, and Teacher of religion to mankind. When we consider that this division of the tabernacle represented the gospel dispensation, we shall at once see the necessity that there should be placed within its sacred walls a symbol of “him whom the Father sanctified” for the sole purpose of laying the foundations of that dispensation. The adaptation of the symbol, too, for adumbrating our Lord, can be hid from none who has paid the least attention to what I have written upon this subject. Nor is it possible to contemplate the station and the attitude assigned them here, without admiring the wisdom displayed in arranging these circumstances to the character and office of our Lord. Not only was it his delight to contemplate the law of the Supreme

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Being with the most unwearied attention, and to meditate upon its precepts day and night—not only was it the constant object of his private conversation and of his public ministry to explain its nature, sanction its authority, and enforce its observance—but every page of his life was an exemplification of its precepts, every word which he uttered was to preserve it from violation, and he seemed to exist for no other purpose than to magnify the law and make it honourable.

But we found, that as the cherubim were inseparably connected with the cover of the ark, a complex symbol was presented to view, which therefore could only refer to one reality. It will be necessary, then, to shew that the cover of the ark had a reference to our Saviour, and to the important office which he was appointed to execute. I may add, that if scripture give us any intimation of this reference, it will confirm what has been said respecting the cherubim, as it is evident that both the cover of the ark and the cherubim indicated the same thing. Indeed, the cover of the ark seems to have been added to the cherubim on account of particular circumstances; not to adumbrate any new reality, but to adumbrate the reality which they had always adumbrated with great force and clearness in that particular instance. It was added, therefore, to the cherubim because the law of eternal rectitude was enclosed within an ark or chest, in order to mark in the most expressive manner the suitableness of the reality to preserve that sacred treasure from every hostile attempt, and to transmit [it] unimpaired to future generations. This, therefore, ought still to be kept in mind, not so much to display the evidence of my interpre-

tation, as to display the adaptation of the symbol employed.

It is an important fact for the support of my doctrine, that St. Paul asserts, that the covering of the ark adumbrated our Lord. This he clearly reveals to us in that famous passage, Rom. iii. 25—a passage which has not only been greatly obscured by our translators, but has been misunderstood by all the commentators which I have seen. “Jesus Christ”—such is the common version—“whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” To explain this passage fully does not belong to my present inquiry; but I must remark, that the word *ἱλαστήριον*, which our translators, to support their preconceived opinions, have rendered *a propitiation*, is the word which the Septuagint continually employ to denominate the cover of the ark. If it was proper to render that word a *mercy-seat* in the many passages where it occurs in the Old Testament, it was certainly proper to render it by the same term here; and this would have directed our attention to that utensil, and consequently would have opened up the true meaning of this much-controverted text: for the apostle, by giving the same name to our Saviour, indicates not only that that cover was the emblem of our Saviour, but that what purpose soever the symbol accomplished under the law, our Saviour accomplished much more perfectly under the gospel.

I shall afterward have occasion more particularly to remark, that, in ancient times, names were imposed



upon persons and things, not only to distinguish them from one another, but to be descriptive of their nature and office. This, I apprehend, was the case with the cover of the ark. The word כִּבֵּר, rendered constantly by the Septuagint *λασθησιον*, is the name which was given by the Almighty to this venerable symbol. It is derived from כִּבֵּר, a term which properly signifies “to cover,” “to hide;” but when employed on subjects connected with the Mosaic economy, it signifies to cover in a peculiar manner—in a manner which, owing to the difference between our religious circumstances and those of the Israelites, no single English word can perfectly express. As I design, with the greatest care, to elucidate this most important subject when I come to consider the doctrine of Atonement, I shall at present anticipate as little as possible. When applied to material subjects, it signifies to cover in such a way as to remove from the surface all filthiness or roughness—every thing, in short, that is disagreeable to sight or to feeling—and to give to it a smoothness and a beauty which before it did not possess. Reasoning, then, from analogy—our only guide at present—it will not be difficult to comprehend its meaning when, in reference to the service of the sanctuary, it is transferred from material to moral subjects, or to man. As in the language of scripture, every sinner is represented, not only as naked or destitute of covering, but as polluted and defiled, the change effected upon him, which the verb in question expresses, must be modified according to the nature of that effect, which the person or thing employed as its nominative is fitted to produce. In its most restricted sense, the verb implies, that the deform-

ity and pollution of sin are removed from sight; and the sinner is then said to be covered with a robe of holiness; and, in its most extensive sense, it implies, that the saint advances from this negative to the positive part of a good character, and is covered or adorned with “a robe of righteousness.” It would be difficult, if not impossible, at the present stage of this inquiry, to convey a distinct and definite idea of the manner in which this change is effected by the different sacrifices under the law, or by the sacrifice of our Lord. This, however, will be fully explained afterward, and these remarks will answer every purpose which I have at present in view.

Keeping these observations in mind, the term כפרת, the name of the cover of the ark, will be easily understood. It must signify the place where the covering already mentioned is accomplished—the place where sinners are delivered from the pollution of sin, are covered with holiness, and are entitled to be called *ἅγιοι*, *holy*—the place where the holy, or saints, are transformed into the image of God from glory to glory, are covered with righteousness, and are entitled to be called *δίκαιοι*, *righteous*. This may be illustrated by comparing *ἰλαστήριον*, the term by which the Septuagint translate it, with other terms formed in the same manner; and I use the Greek language as being more familiar than the Hebrew to most of my readers.—*Δικαζω* signifies *to pronounce judgment*; *δικαστήριον*, the *place where* that judgment is pronounced—a *tribunal*; *θυσιαζω* signifies *to offer sacrifice*; *θυσιαστήριον*, the *place where* sacrifice is offered—an *altar*. *Φυλασσω* signifies *to watch*; *φυλακήριον*, the *place where* the

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watch is stationed. In the same manner, *ἱλασκομαι*, when employed in the Mosaic ritual as the translation of כָּפַר, signifies *to cover* in the manner already described; *ἱλαστήριον*, of course, must signify the *place where* that covering is accomplished. Indeed, this is so obvious, that I am convinced the abettors of every hypothesis will acknowledge that כָּפַר must signify the place where that change or effect is produced, whatever it may be, which is indicated by the verb כָּפַר, from which it is derived.

This then clearly opens up to us the true import of this sacred symbol under the law. It was placed above the ark, to preserve from injury or violence the tables of testimony which were there deposited. Now, as it is this moral and eternal law of rectitude which alone can give the knowledge of sin and the knowledge of duty—which alone can inspire men with the hatred of iniquity and the love of righteousness, it must appear evident, that if ever men are covered with robes of holiness and righteousness, it must be by obedience to this law; and consequently, it must be accomplished in the place where this law is known and is preserved from violation.—Where was it, then, that this law was preserved in all its power and energy; where all the ministers of religion watched over it with peculiar delight, and gave every sanction to its authority? Certainly, in the most holy place, the symbol of the gospel dispensation; and in particular where the cover of the ark and the cherubim guarded it from every rash step, from every profane eye.

Was it possible, then, that any symbol could be adopted more proper for accomplishing the important

end which it had in view? The Israelites were thus taught, that all the other parts of the service of God were appointed to be subservient to the eternal laws of rectitude, and that in these they all met as in their proper centre. That what advantages soever they might derive from the performance of external ceremonies, it was only as these were means to promote a nobler end, as these tended to cover them with holiness and righteousness.—That if they desired counsel and direction from God, they must have pure hands and a right heart; for “the secret of the Lord is with the righteous; and to them that fear him he will shew his covenant.”—That if they expected his blessing upon themselves and their families, their dwellings must be kept sacred, as sanctuaries to God, “for his curse is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just.”—That if they desired to obtain mercy from God, and to receive the pardon of their sins, it was absolutely necessary to “cease to do evil,” and to “learn to do well;” “for the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear him; to those who keep his covenant and remember his commandments to do them.”—That if they hoped to dwell with God for ever, they must be like him; for God only dwells where his law is preserved unbroken—“even in the heart of that man who is of a humble and a contrite spirit, and who trembles at his word.”—That all the dispensations of Providence ultimately tend to guard the abode of righteousness, and to promote the happiness of the good, in every part of the Almighty’s vast dominion. And, finally:—That God with peculiar delight, dwells in the place where

his commandments are kept, where his institutions are venerated, where the inhabitants are covered with "white raiment," and where that white raiment is their own righteous actions.

Few words surely will be necessary to shew how admirably adapted the cover of the ark was to adumbrate our Saviour. Was not he the great teacher of moral righteousness, who came not to destroy, but to explain, to promulgate, and to sanction, the eternal and immutable precepts of rectitude? Is it not by coming unto him—by learning the law at his mouth, by imitating his perfect example, by living under the influence of the glorious hopes, which his death and resurrection brought to light, that men can be delivered from the power of sin, and be covered with holiness; that men can be induced to obey his commandments, and be covered with righteousness; and that men can be enabled to persevere unto the end, that they may finish their course with joy, and ascend to the bosom of their Father?—And, is it not in the gospel dispensation—in his church, where he is received as the messenger of the divine goodness; as the teacher of the divine will; as the image of the divine character; that the laws of God are guarded from violation; that all the inhabitants are righteous; that God peculiarly delights to dwell; and that he discovers his power and his wisdom, his goodness and mercy?—"For where he makes judgment to dwell, and righteousness to flourish, the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

I cannot refrain from adding, that whilst all the

ministers of religion, during former ages, defended the laws of God, and taught the world to obey; they also bent, as it were, their faces towards him; prepared the world for his arrival; and predicted every circumstance respecting himself, respecting his followers, and respecting his religion, with the most consummate wisdom, with the most irresistible power, with the most unremitting perseverance, and with the most decisive promptitude. I may add, that at the present day, the ministers of religion are guarding this religion from every foe; are purifying it from the dross of human composition; are standing, as it were, on tip-toc, and with outstretched wings, ready, when the command is given, to waft it to every shore! Then shall come that glorious period, when a King shall reign in righteousness; when the whole earth shall be a kingdom of righteousness; when all the people shall be righteous; and when every one of them shall adopt the language of the prophet Isaiah, (xi. 10,) "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garment of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

From these observations it will at once appear, that the name which our translators have given to the cover of the ark does not convey its real meaning and import. I readily acknowledge, that it is only where the laws of rectitude are venerated and preserved from violation, that God exercises his mercy and forgiveness; and hence, were this the idea which the term mercy-seat

was employed invariably to convey, no very bad consequences would result from it. But even upon this supposition, it would still be, to substitute the effect for the cause—it would still be, to bring forward a particular consequence, which, with many others equally important, results from a general principle, instead of the general principle itself. Hence, it would be, to keep the primary import of the symbol entirely from view; and to exhibit in its place something else, which, though not contrary to it, would neither be of such general importance, nor of such universal application. I cannot but observe too, that the dangerous doctrines which, if not deduced from the name itself, have undoubtedly been intimately associated with it—such as that men may there obtain mercy and pardon, not only without being covered with holiness and righteousness, but even without repentance—render the name highly improper. Associations intimately formed, and long acted upon, it is almost impossible to tear assunder; and hence, were the name perfectly equivalent to that of the original, which undoubtedly it is not, still from its liability to be abused, it would deserve to be laid aside, and another, not liable to the same objection, to be adopted.

The term propitiatory, which some eminent theologians would adopt, labours under a similar defect. Were this term employed to signify, that wherever men, by obedience to the laws of God, are covered with holiness and righteousness, there God will be propitious, it might be tolerated, though not approved. But I am much afraid, that those who adopt this term, adopt it indicative of a change effected upon God rather than

upon men—as implying, the rendering of God propitious from circumstances connected only with the symbol itself; and not from any moral change effected upon the character and conduct of those to whom he becomes propitious. This is an error similar to that which, I said, receives support from the common name; and hence, were it proper in every other respect, which certainly it is not, it would, upon this account alone, be altogether inadmissible. It is however a sufficient objection to this name, and indeed to every other of a similar import, that it substitutes a particular consequence for a general principle, and thus, whilst it keeps the original and primary import of the Hebrew word entirely from view, it brings forward another perfectly different of our own.

Though it is evident, that the name which we give to this symbol should correspond exactly to the original term, yet, I have already said, from the difference which exists between our manners and religion, and those of the Jews, no such word, perhaps, is to be found in our language. But from the meaning of the verb *כָּסָה*, when employed on sacrifices, it is not difficult to state the exact idea which the name ought to convey,—that it ought to signify the place where men obtain, by the improvement of moral means, a covering of real and personal holiness and righteousness. But as the Hebrew verb is so indefinite as to express, with equal propriety, the obtaining of a covering of either the one or the other of these qualities, and as it is equally applicable to things and to persons, it is evident, that the English word which would express it perfectly, should possess the same properties. Hence;



this term, when applied to a person who offered a sin-offering, denoted only that he was sanctified, or covered with holiness; but when applied to a person who offered a burnt-offering, it denoted that he was also justified, or covered with righteousness. Hence, likewise, when applied to moral agents, it denoted an internal and moral change; but when applied to material subjects, such as the altar, the tabernacle, or the temple, it denoted only an external and ceremonial change.—Though these remarks should not lead us to a proper word to denominate this symbol, yet they will not be made in vain, if they inform us exactly of what we want.

When I entered upon this inquiry, I was determined not to venture upon the formation of any word to denominate the lid of the ark, not only from the difficulty which I found of pleasing myself, but from the conviction that the simple word *cover*, or *covering*, was perhaps the best which our language affords. Indeed, either of these seems to express fully the original import of the Hebrew term, when employed upon common subjects; and from the remarks already made, it appears, that it still retains this as its leading and principal idea. But from its being employed to express the effect of sacrifices, and of other ceremonial rites, upon the moral character of the Jews, it extended its signification, and acquired an import from the nature of those subjects with which it had been long and intimately connected. In the same manner, I am convinced, that if our translators had followed the Hebrew original in this instance, and not the Septuagint translation, and had adopted in every passage the word *covering*, this word, when employed upon subjects connected with the

Jewish ritual, would have been long since understood in a manner suited to the nature of the subject. The misfortune was, that the nature of the Jewish law, and of sacrifices in particular, was totally misunderstood when our translation was made, and the term mercy-seat, as it appeared to favour their preconceived opinions, was adopted.

But if the simple term covering will not satisfy my readers—if a word expressive of moral character is required, I have not the smallest hesitation in recommending the compound term righteousness-seat, as far superior to the common name, in every point of view, except that we have not been accustomed to it. The seat of sanctity, and the seat of rectitude, have likewise occurred to me; but all these are liable to the objection that the word seat has not the least affinity to the word cover, which, it must be confessed, enters deeply into the Hebrew term. If we are to have a compound word, descriptive of some moral quality, the righteousness-cover, or the cover of rectitude, appears, all things considered, the most eligible name which I can propose. But if it were allowed to drop the idea of covering, and to form a word expressive of the moral import of the symbol only, then, in imitation of the formation of the term propitiatory, from the word propitious, I would form the term rectitudory from the word rectitude. At the same time, were this term adopted, it would be necessary to remember, that whilst it denoted the place where the sincere worshippers of God were covered with holiness and righteousness, it would likewise leave it fairly to be implied, that wherever that moral change should be effected upon the worshippers, there the

Almighty would undoubtedly exercise his mercy, his goodness, his wisdom, his power,—in short, all the attributes of his nature, to promote the dignity and happiness of man.

Having thus endeavoured to explain the import of the various utensils found in the court, and in the two divisions of the tabernacle, I am now to consider what proof we have that the court and these divisions were emblematical of the state of religion during the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian ages.

Now, it appears to me, that the exact parallelism between the sign and the thing signified, is the best evidence of the truth of any interpretation of symbolical representations which can be adduced. Why are we led, for instance, to interpret the prophecy recorded in the seventh chapter of Daniel, in which beasts and horns are employed as referring to the four monarchies, and to the kingdom of Christ, which succeeded them, but because the symbols represented in the vision to the prophet have realities corresponding to them in the histories of these kingdoms? Nothing can preclude us surely from adopting the same mode of proof in the subject before us. That the court and tabernacle, then, were constructed with the greatest aptitude to represent the state of religion from the calling of Abraham to the consummation of all things, has, I apprehend, been completely established. The circumstance too, that the service of the court prepared the worshippers for entering into the first tabernacle, and, at the same time, was connected with it in many parts of its ritual; and, that whilst the service of the first tabernacle prepared the worshippers for entering into the second, the

worshippers had no connexion with the second except in one single instance, marks so strongly the real state of mankind in these different periods, that this interpretation must be admitted. Nor can I omit the observation, that the nature of each inclosure, the materials of which the symbols of each were formed, and the different degrees of sanctity which were attached to each in succession, all are so consonant with the ideas which scripture gives us of the real state of religion during these successive periods, that nothing can be conceived more complete. As far, then, as we are influenced by the nature of things, and choose reason for our guide, we shall adopt the interpretation here given.

But when scripture is not entirely silent, the last appeal ought to be made to its decisions. The passage which I formerly quoted from Ephes. ii. 14, when explaining the curtains that inclosed the court, appears to me perfectly sufficient to convince us that the court represented the Jewish church as distinguished from the Gentile world. I now remark, that Heb. ix. 9, will convince us farther that the first tabernacle, or the holy place, represented the Jewish church under the law, as distinguished from the same church before the law was given. The words to which I allude, taken in connexion with the context, are the following: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing; which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him who did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience."—Now, the phrase "which was a figure for the time

then present," clearly informs us, that the first tabernacle, that is, the first division of the tabernacle, was a figure or symbol of something. Of what then was it the symbol? Certainly of the state of religion during the Mosaic economy: for if it had not a reference to that, it had a reference to nothing.—But the truth is, in some of the manuscripts which have been consulted, there is found of this passage a different reading, which is of the greatest importance. Instead of Ἦτις παραβολὴ εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεσηκοτα, which is the reading which our translation, not very correctly, follows, we have Ἦτις παραβολὴ εἰς τοῦ καιροῦ ἐνεσηκοτος, which not only gives a clearness to the expression, and a force and consistency to the reasoning of the writer, but infallibly confirms my interpretation. The literal version of the words will then be, "Which was a symbol of the time then present;" that is of the Jewish economy, which, as this writer informs us, "was imposed upon them until the time of the reformation."

But this reasoning will receive additional force from considering the information which the same passage gives us respecting the import of the most holy place: "But into the second tabernacle went the high-priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." Now it ought to be observed, that by the first tabernacle here mentioned, we are by no means to understand, with Sykes and many other commentators of great reputation, the whole fabric, but only the first division of the taberna-

cle. This must be evident to every person who consults the original, where *της πρώτης σκηνης*, *the first tabernacle*, in the end of the eighth verse, evidently refers to *σκηνη—ἡ πρώτη*, *a tabernacle—the first*, in the beginning of the second verse; and in both places, the first tabernacle is mentioned in contradistinction to the *σκηνη μετα το δεύτερον καταπέτασμα*, *the tabernacle which is after the second veil*, in the third verse, or what, in the seventh verse, is called *την δευτέραν*, *the second tabernacle*. Nothing then is more evident, than that the first tabernacle is the holy place, and the second tabernacle the most holy. The apostle, therefore, has no respect to the standing or falling of the whole edifice, but to the continuance of the service, which was daily performed in the holy place. Hence his meaning is, “The Jews had no access into this second tabernacle, this most holy place, to perform divine service there, during the period that divine service was performed in the first tabernacle, the holy place; but whenever the service of God ceased to be performed in the first, then the way into the second was made manifest.” Now, as I lately proved that the service of the first was the symbol of the Mosaic dispensation, this proves that the service of the second was the symbol of the Christian dispensation. Upon this interpretation, all is natural, all is clear and consistent. Whenever the service of the first terminated, the service of the second commenced. Hence, the first and the second tabernacles were nothing else but the symbols of the first and second covenants; and as the same author says, (viii. 13,) the first decaying and waxing old “was ready to vanish away,” to make

room for the second ; which, as it was much more perfect, was to remain, while sun and moon endured. Nor was this any disparagement of the first tabernacle or covenant, as it was suited to the time in which it was given, and was originally designed to continue only “ to the time of reformation.”

But further, it appears to me impossible, that this passage can agree with the common interpretation, that the most holy place was the emblem of heaven, without the utmost straining and torturing of the word of God.—Was there ~~no~~ entrance into heaven during the time that the first tabernacle stood ? Were Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and all the prophets, precluded from the reward of their faith and patience, till the Messiah came ? Was Elijah debarred from the mansions of glory, notwithstanding what we are told, (2 Kings ii. 11,) “ that he went up by a whirlwind into heaven ” ?—Nor will it be any objection to this reasoning, to say, that it can have no force if what many maintain be true, that there will be no entrance into heaven, properly so called, till after the resurrection. The truth of the apostle’s doctrine does not depend upon the solution of any question of doubtful disputation, but remains unshaken what way soever that point be decided. Had such a question entered into the apostle’s reasoning, his argument would not only have had no force, but would have been manifestly false—the way into the holiest of all would not have been opened even when the first tabernacle was fallen ; nay, in this sense, it could not be opened while the world stands.—An objection of this kind, can only perplex the question, and destroy itself.

This leads me to observe, that the rending of the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom, at the very moment of our Saviour's death, is such a striking confirmation of my doctrine, that it must not be overlooked. Indeed, I consider this as perfectly decisive on the point, and, at the same time, so wonderfully adapted to lead us to the true import of the two divisions of the tabernacle, that I cannot sufficiently admire the wisdom of the Divine Architect who disposed and executed all these things with such astonishing accuracy. It is a circumstance, too, which never would have suggested itself to the minds of the evangelists if it had not really taken place. I can easily imagine that men of superior learning, who resigned themselves to the guidance of the imagination—that men—not such as the writers of our Lord's history evidently were—but men intimately acquainted with the poetry of Greece, who were eager to dress up a great character, and adorn a fictitious narrative—would, at the death of their hero, have darkened the sun, rent the rocks, and shook the earth. But, not to mention that, from the beginning to the end of the gospel history, there does not appear the smallest effort to give the least colouring to the character of our Lord, or to raise the reader's admiration of his dignity and importance—not to mention that the evangelists relate the most stupendous exertions of miraculous power with as much simplicity and coolness as if they had been the most indifferent actions—it ought still to be remembered, that this circumstance is not only perfectly different, in every point of view, from the other phenomena, but is, abstractly considered, not worthy of being mentioned



with them. Notwithstanding all this, it is the first thing that the writer brings forward, and brings forward with an exclamation of astonishment; and not only does he dwell upon it with a pleasure which seems altogether disproportioned to the nature of the event, but with a redundancy of expression almost bordering upon tautology, though certainly perfectly free from it. "And behold!" exclaims he, "the veil of the temple, *εσχισθη*, was torn asunder!" This, however, is not enough: *εις δυο*, "into two parts:"—nor does this suffice: *απο ανωθεν εως κατω*, "from the top even to the bottom." What a difference of expression this from the description afterwards given of the rending of the rocks! The same verb, *εσχισθησαν*, marks this event likewise; but though to appearance an event of far greater magnitude and importance, yet not a single circumstance further respecting it is mentioned.

As many are apt to entertain a wrong opinion upon this subject, it will be proper to mention, that this is not the veil to which I formerly directed the reader's attention, as surrounding the court, and to which the apostle may be said to allude in Ephes. ii. 14, 15. The middle wall of partition belonging to the temple did not supply the place of the veil which divided the tabernacle in the middle, as some from this passage are ready to conclude; but it supplied the place of the first veil which was in the middle—that is, between the Jews and Gentiles—and precluded the latter from entering into the court. The breaking down of this veil, if I may be allowed the expression, denoted the removal of that barrier, which hindered the Gentiles from

associating with the Jews in the exercises of religion. But the rending asunder of the second veil, here alluded to, which separated the holy from the most holy place, denoted a very different thing—"that the way into the holiest of all was now made manifest"—that the dispensation adumbrated by the first tabernacle, was finished, and that the dispensation adumbrated by the second, was begun.

Nor can I refrain from observing, that though our information is not so explicit as we could wish, yet it is sufficient to satisfy us that the figures which were wrought upon these two veils were very different. Upon the first there were no cherubim; but, as we supposed from circumstances formerly mentioned, there were the figures of those animals and fruits which composed the subjects employed in the Mosaic ceremonies. This was highly proper, as it denoted that Divine Providence did not exclude the Gentiles from associating with the Jews—that nothing but these ceremonies obstructed their entrance into the court, and that upon their compliance with them they would be admitted. But, upon the second veil, the principal figures were cherubim; and they are mentioned by God, (Exod. xxvi. 31, xxxvi. 35,) with such particular care, as fully marks their great importance. This was equally proper, as it denoted that the entrance into the most holy place—that is, into the gospel dispensation—was shut up, not by a partition of ceremonies, which could be passed through by a compliance with them, but by a barrier which Divine Providence had raised, and which Divine Providence only could remove. Hence neither the wisdom nor the power of man could anticipate or

retard the period when Christ should come, and lay the foundations of his religion—the period which was fixed and determined by God himself, and which the dispensations of his providence rendered, in the highest degree, fit and expedient for that purpose.

But perhaps I shall be told, that it is altogether vain to attempt to prove that the most holy place was the symbol of the Christian dispensation, since that apostle from whom I have drawn most of the foregoing proofs, in several passages (Heb. viii. 5, ix. 23, 24) expressly asserts, that it was the symbol of heaven.—This objection, I suspect, will have great weight with many—with all, in short, who are content with words instead of things, who are “ministers of the letter,” and not of “the spirit,” of this Epistle. I am convinced, however, that those passages which are supposed to be so hostile to my opinion, will, if fairly investigated, prove its firmest support. To shew this, I would observe, that nothing is more common in scripture than to denote the gospel dispensation by the very name which is said in the objection to be incompatible with it. Indeed, “the heavens,” or “the kingdom of the heavens,” is an expression so frequently found in the unerring mouth of our Lord himself to denominate the Christian church, that to produce proofs of it would be an insult to the reader. Nay, so constantly does he employ it, that it would not be an extravagant assertion to maintain, that it is the common name which the dispensation of Jesus bears in the writings of the evangelists. The phraseology of the apostle, therefore, when, in the passages just now quoted, he says that the most holy place was the symbol of “heavenly things,” or of “the

heavens," is nothing else but a continuation of the phraseology which the Son of God himself had employed, and which he had sanctioned by his authority.

• The same language, it ought to be mentioned, has been employed by St. Paul in several parts of his writings, and consequently has, in the same way, been misunderstood. When, in Ephes. ii. 6, he says, "God hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together, *εν τοις επουρανιαις*, in heavenly places," or, literally, "in the heavenlies," he has not the least respect to the general resurrection, and to the enjoyment of heaven afterward. The whole context, as well as the verse itself, clearly proves that the apostle is speaking of what had been done, and not of what was to be done afterward. God had already, by the agency of his Son, raised them up, and had already set them in heavenly places. The entire passage undoubtedly refers to that great moral change which God, by his Son, had effected upon the Gentile world. When we "were dead in trespasses and sins," he quickened and raised us up to a life of faith and obedience. When we were "without God, and without hope in the world," he set us in heavenly places, brought us into the gospel dispensation, and gave us the hope of everlasting life.

• Though what I have said upon this passage appears to me sufficient to explain every similar one, and to establish the doctrine which I maintain; yet I must request the attention of the reader to another in the same Epistle, which has not only been obscured by our translators, but has been misunderstood by every commentator which I have seen. The passage to which I allude is Ephes. vi. 11, 12: "Put on the whole

armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil: for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Though it would be easy to prove that the term *devil* is to be understood in the manner which I am about to mention, yet as it would lead me into a disquisition too prolix for this place, and as I have fully considered the subject in an Essay on Original Sin, I shall merely state my opinion, and leave it to the judgment of the reader. It is evident that the apostle, both in the text and context, employs the strong and figurative language of the Jewish writers, in which, by metaphors and allegories well understood by those to whom he wrote, he describes real persons and things. When we remember that the Christians were then in the lowest stage of weakness and depression, and that the power and energy of the Roman empire were continually employed to accomplish their destruction, we shall at once see, not only the propriety and justice, but the absolute necessity of this precaution. The apostle, then, employs the word *devil* in the same manner as our Saviour employs the word *Satan*, (in Matt. xvi. 23, and Mark viii. 33,) not as the real name of any being or person, but as the well-known emblem or symbol of every being or person that is animated with a certain temper and disposition, and pursues a corresponding line of conduct. Here it is undoubtedly employed as the symbol of that idolatry which from the earliest age overspread the world, and which, at that particular period, inspired the hearts of the Roman governors,

and wielded the whole power of the empire against the religion of Jesus. When we consider, then, the envy and malice which inflamed the votaries of idolatry and wickedness, and incited them to employ slander and falsehood, rapine and cruelty, against the reputation, the property, and the persons of the Christians, we shall be at no loss to comprehend the reason which induced the apostle to give this exhortation, as well as to clothe it in metaphor and allegory. I may remark, too, that the armour which they were to put on, is also figurative, suited to the nature of the whole composition. "The armour of God," or "the armour of righteousness," as it is emphatically called, (2 Cor. vi. 7,) is nothing else but the moral virtues of truth, of justice, of peaceableness, with which every Christian was to cover himself, as with a complete suit of armour; and, above or besides all these, it was necessary for them to employ, as a shield, a firm belief of the existence and unity of God, of the wisdom and goodness of his administration, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. Thus, and thus only, would they be able to stand against the *μεθοδεϊας*, *methods*, wiles, stratagems, which idolatry employed against the worshippers of the One God, and to quench all the fiery darts—alluding to the weapons employed in actual warfare at that time—to quench all the fiery darts which "that wicked one," who was both the high-priest of idolatry and the supreme civil governor of the idolatrous world, discharged against them. Hence the exhortation of Paul, stripped of its allegoric dress, is nothing else but an advice to Christians to improve all the privileges which the gospel dispensation afforded them to

adorn their character and conduct with all those virtues which God had enjoined them, and which would enable them either to shun the malice and rage of their enemies, or to bear them with patience and fortitude.

But to the point.—The words *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, which our translators render “in high places,” are the very words which are found, not only in Ephes. ii. 6, but, but what is more, in Heb. ix. 23, and which, in both these passages, are properly rendered “heavenly places,” or “the heavenly things.” Now, I imagine, that little knowledge in biblical criticism is necessary to discover, that the phrase “high places” is appropriated, not to heavenly places, but to those altars and groves which were consecrated to the worship of idols, and which were generally placed on high and elevated situations. Though the phrase “high places,” therefore, has no more relation to heaven than the phrase “low places,” yet our translators thought themselves authorized to translate *τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* by it, merely because, in compliance with popular conceptions, heaven is said to be “high above the earth,” without ever considering, that thus they not only kept the sentiment of the apostle entirely from view, but substituted another of their own in its place.

But the real cause of this, and indeed of almost all errors in religion, was a deference to preconceived opinions, and a desire to make the Scriptures speak a language consistent with them. Thus have translators often given a seeming foundation to error, and have hurt the beauty and consistency of the word of God. Imagining that the term “heavenlies” in this, and in all similar passages, referred to the future state of the

blessed, our translators saw the impropriety of asserting that there was wickedness there, and hence, to keep such an impropriety from view, they rendered the passage as they have done. I apprehend, however, that they ought to have reasoned in a very different manner; that when they saw the impropriety of the apostle's words, when understood literally, they ought to have tried what would be the consequence of understanding them figuratively, and to have inquired whether the term "heavenlies" ever bore in scripture a meaning consistent with the admission of wickedness. Even if they could not have found, from the imperfection of their religious knowledge, any such meaning, they ought to have translated the word in its common acceptation, and to have left it to the ingenuity of the reader to find out the sense in the best manner he could.

A few observations more will explain the whole passage. By "blood and flesh"—such is the arrangement of the original—the apostle does not mean men hostile to Christianity, but the appetites and passions belonging to our corporeal frame, and which we have in common with the inferior animals. These, as they are original parts of our constitution, and are absolutely necessary to the preservation and happiness of the individual and the species, are neither sinful in themselves, nor, when properly employed, tend to sin. But as God has given them power to incite, but not authority to command, it is evident that they are formed to obey, and to be directed and regulated by a superior principle. That superior principle is reason, a principle which has not only power to incite, like the former, but has



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also authority to command, and to reward or punish as circumstances require. To preserve that order which God has established, and that subordination which is the work of his hands, ought to be the great business of life; and in proportion as it is accomplished, men are virtuous and prepared for immortality.—Further, the words *τας αρχας* and *τας εξουσιας*, which our translators render “*principalities*” and “*powers*,” are the words which, in Luke xii. 11, are rendered “*magistrates*” and “*powers*.” It is impossible that in Luke they can refer to evil spirits; as the whole context proves that they are employed to designate those civil and ecclesiastical rulers before whom the apostles were to be dragged by their persecutors. In the passage before us, it ought to be understood in the same sense; and the consideration, that every malicious and slanderous accuser who should bring the Ephesians before these magistrates and princes, would be listened to and rewarded, was the most cogent motive which Paul could employ to induce them to live, not only without evil, but without the appearance of it.—As I imagine that the “*principalities*” and “*powers*” comprehend all the external enemies with whom the Christians had to contend, it follows, that the remaining part of the verse is exegetical or explanatory of them. What our translators render, “the rulers of the darkness of this world,” ought to be rendered, “the worldly rulers of the darkness of this age”—a periphrasis which, without naming any particular person or office, was admirably descriptive of the Roman emperors, and those civil rulers who acted under them, who in that age governed by worldly maxims a people overwhelmed with the

shades of ignorance, of error, and of idolatry, and who exerted their whole power, not to dissipate, but to darken the gloom.—Again, the words which in our version are rendered “spiritual wickedness in high places,” when translated literally, are, “the spiritual dominion of wickedness in heavenly places;” for the word “dominion,” which I have here supplied, or some term corresponding to it, is necessary to make out the construction, as well as the sense. No words could describe more accurately the ecclesiastical rulers with whom the Ephesians had continually to wrestle. I apprehend the apostle had here in view the Jewish sanhedrim, who, as they had been brought into the church of God, and made the subjects of his spiritual kingdom, were figuratively said to be “in heavenly places”—in places of power and authority in the church of God upon earth. That the description is perfectly applicable to the ecclesiastical rulers of the Jews, is evident from Matt. xxiv. 29, where the sun, the moon, the stars, and the powers of heaven, are the acknowledged symbols of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Jews.—The description, likewise, is as proper for designating those false teachers who assumed to themselves power and authority “in the heavens”—that is, in the Christian church, with whom the apostle and every good Christian had constantly to struggle. Nor ought we to exclude that antichristian power, which was even then begun in the Christian church, and which succeeding ages beheld perfected in that vast dominion which the Church of Rome claimed to herself over all who professed the religion of Jesus, and against which the true disciples of Christ have glori-

ously struggled, and are still struggling.—Such is the detailed description of what the apostle denominated “principalities and powers” in the beginning of the verse.

I shall conclude these remarks, which have extended further than I expected, by a literal translation of the verse, interspersed with a short commentary : “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”—of every false and malicious accuser.—“For we wrestle not against blood and flesh”—we have not only to contend with internal opponents, with those appetites and passions which it is our duty to regulate and restrain according to the dictates of reason and conscience—“but against principalities, against powers”—which, from prudential motives, I refrain from naming, though the following description will clearly point them out to you, who have been instructed in the import of the terms which I shall employ. We wrestle, then, against principalities and powers of two kinds: first, “against the worldly rulers of the darkness of this age”—against those civil rulers who govern the kingdoms of the world, unhappily involved in all that superstition and idolatry which characterize this benighted age;—and, secondly, “against the spiritual dominion of wickedness in heavenly places”—that is, against all those ecclesiastical rulers, whether Jews or Christians, but especially the latter, who abuse the power and authority which they have obtained in the gospel dispensation, emphatically denominated “the kingdom of heaven,” to promote the cause of wickedness, and consequently to oppose and grieve every real disciple of

Jesus.—Such is the clear and consistent sense of the apostle in this passage—a passage which shews the propriety and necessity of that obscure and figurative language, in which the apostle wrapt plain and important truths, when writing, to those who were well instructed to look to the spirit and not to the letter,—a passage, in short, which, by asserting that wickedness was in places denominated heavenly, evidently fixes these places to the church of God in this world, and not in the world to come.

But it will be said, that though the words in question are thus proved to be perfectly applicable to the Christian dispensation, yet as they are likewise applied to the mansions of immortality, all that I have done is only to leave the question doubtful, and hence, before it can be legitimately settled, an appeal must be made to other circumstances, in order to ascertain the sense of those passages in which they are found, and which are now supposed to be ambiguous.

Now, as this appears to be perfectly fair, and to be equally favourable to truth, on what side soever it may lie, the only thing that remains is to inquire which of the two meanings which the phrase “heavenly places” may bear, is most consistent with the nature of the subject which the apostle is explaining, and with all the acknowledged circumstances of the case.

When we consider the nature of the subject which the apostle is elucidating, I apprehend we shall see the propriety of understanding the phrase in the manner I do. It is now acknowledged, that it may be understood either literally or figuratively. Now, when is it that we can reasonably expect that it will be employed in

the one way, and when in the other? Nothing, I apprehend, is more certain than that, when the apostle is treating of a plain and unadorned subject, we should expect that the phrase would be employed literally, and when he is treating of a symbolical and enigmatical subject, we should expect that it would be employed figuratively. This, then, gives me all I contend for. The Epistle to the Hebrews is confessedly figurative and allegorical; its constant design is to explain the nature and import of the symbolical dispensation of Moses; and even the language of those few passages which refer to practice, is highly metaphorical. To explain, then, the phrase in question literally in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is no less absurd than to explain similar phrases in the book of Revelation literally; in which, it may be observed, the term "heaven" is found almost constantly to denominate the Christian dispensation.

But, decisive as is this proof, I must observe, that my interpretation will receive still stronger confirmation from a consideration of the acknowledged circumstances of the case. One of these circumstances has been already alluded to, but, to give full effect to the argument, it must again be introduced. In Heb. ix. 7, 8, we are told, that "into the second division of the tabernacle went the high-priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest; while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." Now, according to the common doctrine, it is evident that the apostle here asserts, that there was no

entrance into the holiest of all—that is, into heaven—during the continuance of the Mosaic dispensation. But as the way into heaven has been manifest and open to the good as well before as after the conclusion of the Mosaic dispensation, the absurdity, nay, the falsehood, of such an assertion, and consequently of the interpretation upon which it depends, cannot be concealed. But can such a charge be preferred against my interpretation? Was it possible that the way into the Gospel dispensation could be manifest or open to any of the human race during the continuance of the Mosaic dispensation, when the same event—the death of Christ—was to rend asunder the veil that shut up the way, was to terminate the latter, and to begin the former? I will leave the answer of this question to the reader's candour; but I beg leave to remind him, that if it be favourable to my opinion, it will follow, not only that the most holy place was the symbol of the Christian, but also that the holy place was the symbol of the Mosaic economy.

I observe further, that the assertion of the apostle, (Heb. viii. 3—5,) appears altogether irreconcilable to the common interpretation: “For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law; who serve, *ὑποδείγματι*, unto the example and shadow, *τῶν οὐρανίων*, of heavenly things.”—In order that I may elucidate this passage, it will be necessary to ascertain the meaning of the term *ὑποδείγμα*, which our translators render *example*. I may

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mention, too, that the explanation of this term will also determine the signification of *σκια*, here rendered *shadow*, as it is evident that they are employed as synonymous. Now, I imagine, that *ὑποδειγμα* never has the signification which the English word *type* has, though the writings of theologists prove that this has been constantly maintained. I confess it is more difficult than is commonly supposed to define precisely what theologists mean by this term. If I am not mistaken, they employ it to signify some expressive action or thing, appointed by God for the sole purpose of presignifying or adumbrating some other action or thing, which is future, and to which it either has, or is supposed to have, some analogy. The type, therefore, has no intrinsic excellence, is appointed not for its own sake, and is employed merely as a sign. The reality, on the contrary, has an intrinsic excellence, is appointed for its own sake, and is therefore the thing signified.—Whether the Mosaic economy typified, in this sense, the Christian dispensation, will be considered afterward; but at present I would remark, that *ὑποδειγμα* in no passage of scripture implies that the things to which it refers were appointed for the purpose of typifying or presignifying others. It implies only, that there is as much resemblance or analogy in the one to the other, as may be a sufficient foundation for a simile or comparison, in order to explain and illustrate what is recent and obscure in the one, by what has been long perfectly understood in the other. But it is divine appointment alone, and not resemblance or similarity, which constitutes one thing the type of another. If resemblance or similarity could effect this, then the

first ship which was built must have been the type of all succeeding ships; the first battle which was fought must have been the type of every subsequent battle; and the first day and year must have been types of all future days and years.—But that the term *ὑποδειγμα* implies nothing more than this resemblance or similarity, the following examples will prove:

In John xiii. 14, 15, after our Lord had washed the feet of his disciples, he says, “If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet: for I have given you, *ὑποδειγμα*, *an example*, that ye should do as I have done to you.” Here we find, between the action done and the action required, an exact resemblance or similarity, as there undoubtedly was between the sacrifices which the Jewish priests and that which our Lord offered up; and this made him declare, with the greatest propriety, that he had given them an example or pattern: but I will never reason with the man who shall maintain, that the conduct of our Lord was appointed to be a type, in the theologic sense of that word. Indeed, the word might, with equal propriety, have been applied to any other action of our Saviour’s life, as the whole was designed to be an example for our imitation.

Again: in 1 Pet. ii. 6, it is said, “God turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them *ὑποδειγμα*, *an example* unto those that after should live ungodly.” Now, is it possible to believe, that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, for the purpose of appointing a type of that destruction which wicked men should



afterward endure?" That destruction was itself a great and awful reality, which every subsequent destruction which God should bring upon the ungodly would in some points resemble; and this resemblance was all which the word *ὑποδειγμα* was designed to express.

Let us now return to the passage from which we set out.—It is evident, that the apostle is speaking in it of the Jewish high-priests, when they offered sacrifices according to the law. But I shall afterward fully prove, that these sacrifices were appointed by God, not to be types of the sacrifice of Christ, in the theologic sense of that word, but to be symbols of the moral temper and conduct of the offerers. It is easily seen, then, that the word here must be employed in its common acceptation, not to mark the relation which the sacrifices of the law, as types, bear to the sacrifice of Christ, which would be most absurd; but to mark the resemblance or similarity, which there evidently was, and of necessity must have been, between the sacrifices under the law and the sacrifice of Christ under the gospel.—Now I would ask, where was it that our Saviour offered up the sacrifice of himself? Was it in heaven, or on earth? On earth, undoubtedly.—Hence, the Jewish high-priests could not be said to perform a religious service—such is the meaning of *λατρευουσι*—could not be said to perform a religious service which should have a resemblance to the religious service which our Lord was to perform in heaven, when we are morally certain that in heaven he never performed any such service. But as our Saviour was once offered, as a sacrifice, upon the cross—apply the reasoning of the apostle to him at that eventful period, and all is

clear, all is conclusive. The priests under the law, says he, when they offered sacrifice to God, performed a religious service, which bore a striking resemblance to the religious service which our Lord performed in the heavens, that is, in the gospel dispensation when he offered up the sacrifice of himself.

But if the reasoning of the apostle is clear and consistent upon my interpretation, it is evident, that it must be confused and inconsistent upon an interpretation that is in direct opposition to it. This has been, in some measure, already shewn; the following observations will shew it still more perfectly. If by the phrase "heavenly things," then, we understand the mansions to [which] our Saviour ascended, it follows, that the apostle plainly asserts not only that heaven and its furniture—if I may be allowed the expression—has a resemblance to the tabernacle and its furniture; but also, that our Saviour, after his ascension into heaven, offered up himself a sacrifice to God, in a manner similar to that in which the Jewish priests offered their sacrifices in the tabernacle.—To say, that heaven is a place of religious service, and that religious service is performed there, is nothing to the purpose. Of such general and vague statements, in which there is nothing precise, nothing definite, every person must loudly complain, especially on subjects which require the greatest precision and accuracy. To vindicate the assertion of the apostle, upon the common interpretation, it is necessary to shew, that in heaven there must, besides many others which I shall not mention, be things corresponding to the laver and the sin-offering; that is, in the lowest sense admissible, that there are in heaven,

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sinner who confess their sins, who repent of their sins, and who are purged or purified from their sins. Without being more particular, this, joined to the assertion that Christ must have died there as a sacrifice, is certainly sufficient to shew that the common interpretation cannot be true.—But do we meet with the same absurdities when we look to the Christian dispensation for things resembling these? Did not Christ offer up himself as a sacrifice, under the gospel, in a similar manner, and to accomplish similar purposes, as the Jewish priests under the law? And is there not now, as there were formerly, sinners who confess their sins, who repent of their sins, and who are purified from their sins?—It is but doing justice to truth and to my interpretation, to observe, that whilst both the law and the gospel had, and of necessity must have had, such realities as sanctification, justification, and peace of mind, resulting from these; yet these realities under the law, might, with the greatest propriety, be said to be only a mere shadow in comparison with the far more excellent realities of the gospel.—This, however, will be fully illustrated afterward.

I observe further, that the declaration of the apostle (Heb. ix. 21—23) is still more inconsistent with the common hypothesis. “Moreover,” says he, “he sprinkled likewise with blood, both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.”—That we

may see, not only the absurdity of the common interpretation, but the justness of the apostle's doctrine, it will be necessary to consider this important passage with some minuteness.

I observe, then, that the word *αφεσις*, rendered in the 22d verse, very improperly, by our translators, *remission*, has not the least respect to the pardon of sin. It will not be necessary for me to state in this place my reasons for asserting this, as the meaning of the term does not at all affect my present argument, and as I design to do this when I come to consider the doctrine of the atonement. I deem it necessary, however, to make this declaration, lest the reader should imagine that I acknowledge the justness of the common translation, or the doctrines which are commonly deduced from it. In this passage, where it is applied to ceremonial impurity, and, indeed, in every passage where it is applied to sin, it invariably signifies *dismissal*; and implies that the thing to which it refers, is dismissed, is removed from the place or person to which it formerly adhered. As the apostle is here speaking of the tabernacle and its various utensils, it is impossible that the word can have any reference to moral evil; but must be understood in consistency with the nature of these things, and with the other terms of the sentence which ascertain and illustrate it. When we find it joined with *καθαρίζω* and *καθαρίζεσθαι*, rendered very properly, by our translators, *purged* and *purified*, we must at once see, that it can only refer to the dismissal, the removal, or, to employ the explanation of the writer himself, the purging away of that filth or defilement, which, according to the Jewish economy, was supposed

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to adhere to all material substances which had been employed in common uses. When they were sprinkled with blood, this filth or defilement, as I shall afterward fully explain, was supposed to be removed from them and they were then said to be sanctified or consecrated to the purposes of religion.

I observe further, that the word *ὑποδείγματα*, here rendered *patterns*, is to be understood in exactly the same sense which we assigned to it when explaining the former passage. It by no means implies that the things to which it refers were types, in the theologic sense of that word, of other things; but only that they had a resemblance or similarity to them. This will appear, if we remember, that the things, to which it is here applied, were not merely the most holy place and its furniture, which might be said, not very improperly, to be a type of the gospel dispensation, but also the court, the first tabernacle, the book of the law, and all the people. But I have already proved, that the court and the first tabernacle were appointed by God to be symbols of the patriarchal and the Jewish churches, and consequently they could not be types of things very different from these. But it is evident that the word here has no respect to types or symbols whatever, since it is applied to things which we cannot conceive to have been types or symbols of any thing; and when a word, at one and the same time, is applied to several things, it must be limited in its signification to that meaning in which it can be applied, not to some of them, but to all. The word therefore must be applied to the court and tabernacle in the same sense in which it is applied to the book of the law, and to the Jewish peo-

ple; and it will surely never be maintained, that the book of the law was the type of the New Testament, or that the Jews were nothing but mere shadows, who had no reality, but were appointed by God only to be types of the Christians. The truth is, the apostle employs the word here in its common acceptation, to denote a resemblance or similarity, which he maintains there was between the first and second covenants—between the dispensation of Moses and the dispensation of Christ. The court, the tabernacle, the book of the law, and the people, were patterns of things in the heavens, or in the Christian dispensation, not as types appointed to presignify them before they existed, but by exhibiting in their purification an example of the manner in which the purification of the Christian dispensation was afterward accomplished. In short, all that the apostle does, is only to compare the purification of the Mosaic economy with that of the Christian, that, from the well-known and acknowledged circumstances of the former, he might illustrate and confirm the circumstances of the latter, which were still the subject of disputation.

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Keeping these remarks in view, I shall give the reasoning of the apostle from the eighteenth verse, in a short paraphrase. “It ought to be remembered,” says he, “that the first covenant was not dedicated without blood. For when Moses, as it is recorded, (Exod. xxiv.,) had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves, and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and the people, saying, This is the blood which confirms the covenant which God

hath made with you. Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things, belonging to the first covenant, are, according to the nature of the law, purged from the pollution, which every thing employed in common use, is supposed to contract; so that it may be laid down as a fixed maxim, that without sprinkling of blood, there is no removal, no purging away of this pollution; and consequently, every thing which is not thus purified must be unclean, and be unfit for the service of God. But from the resemblance and similarity which there evidently is between the dispensation of Moses and that of Christ, the purification of the former may, with great propriety, be considered as affording an excellent example, or pattern, of the manner in which the purification of the latter should have taken place. If it was therefore necessary that these things, which we justly look upon as a proper example of what is requisite under the gospel dispensation, should be purified with the blood of the victims formerly mentioned, the propriety of Christ's death will at once appear,—it is certainly as necessary that the gospel dispensation, a dispensation truly heavenly and divine, should be purified—and purified, in proportion to its greater excellence, with better sacrifices. Christ, therefore, with his own blood, confirmed the book of his covenant, the religion which he taught; sanctified, from the love and pollution of sin, his people, the Christian church; and consecrated the ministers of his religion for the important office assigned them.” — Thus, then, the analogy is complete.—The Mosaic dispensation, and all that belonged to it, were purified

and consecrated, by the blood of bulls and of goats ; and in imitation of that expressive event, the Christian dispensation was purified and consecrated by the blood of Jesus.

Having thus explained the passage, and shewn its consistency with my opinion, that by the heavenly things we are to understand the gospel dispensation, I shall now endeavour to set before the reader the absurdity of the common interpretation.—To maintain, then, as this passage does, according to that interpretation, that heaven, into which nothing that defileth, or worketh abomination, ever did, or can enter, stood in need of purification, is perfectly absurd. It is both curious and instructive to see the difficulty to which commentators are here reduced ; and the struggles which they make to extricate themselves. All who have ventured upon the consideration of the difficulty, whatever were their opinions on other things, have been obliged to confess, that the expression of the apostle is altogether inapplicable to heaven. And yet, after making this confession—such is the blindness of men to long-established error—they still apply it to heaven ; and give what they call an interpretation of it, which, while it seems to confirm the assertion of the apostle, and consequently, blinds a careless reader, entirely abandons it as untenable.—As this is a weighty charge it will require some proof.

Doddridge, after saying in his paraphrase, “ That the celestial things themselves were purified with the sacred blood of Christ himself,” adds, in a note, “ It may perhaps seem strange that celestial things should be spoken of as needing to be purified and cleansed.



But it is to be considered, that as the sacred dwelling and the vessels were esteemed to be polluted by the Israelites, who, in various degrees, had access to them ; so heaven would have been, as it were, polluted by the entrance of such sinners as went into it, had not the blood of Christ intervened."—Now, is this to explain and confirm the assertion of the apostle? Certainly not. To say, "that heaven would have been, as it were, polluted by the entrance of such sinners as went into it," is the most egregious trifling, as the explanatory clause, "as it were," clearly indicates that the writer did not believe that it was possible that heaven could be polluted.—But what is more ; the apostle surely is not speaking of what would have been done, if an impossibility had taken place—and an impossibility it is for sinners to enter into heaven—but he is speaking, as any writer of common sense would speak, of what was absolutely necessary to be done, and of what was actually done, in circumstances which really did exist.

The opinion of Bishop Fell, to which Doddridge alludes in the same note, gives, I acknowledge, according to the common interpretation, a real meaning to the words of the apostle ; but whilst he shuns the absurdity of contradicting the assertion which he ought to explain and confirm, he runs into another equally great. "That the blood of Christ actually purified heaven from pollutions which it had contracted by the sin of angels," is his opinion ; and as it appears much better fitted for the page of poetic fiction, than for that of rational divinity, I shall leave it undisturbed for some future Milton.

The opinion of Whitby must always come recom-

mended by learning and acuteness to the reader of scripture; but when the principle is wrong, learning and acuteness may amuse, but will never satisfy an inquisitive mind. After speaking of the purification of the tabernacle, he adds, "In like manner was heaven itself to be prepared or purified for us by our Lord's entrance into it with his own atonement, or propitiatory sacrifice. 1st, "That our prayers and praises might ascend up thither, and be accepted at God's mercy-seat, as being offered to God by our high-priest, and rendered acceptable by the atonement he had made for the pollution cleaving to them." — 2dly, "That our persons might be admitted into this heavenly tabernacle, as being cleansed by his blood from those defilements which they had contracted."—The palpable contradiction, into which this great man has here fallen, cannot escape observation. When he began by saying, that, in like manner as the tabernacle had been purified, heaven itself was to be purified for us, I had some hopes that he was going to confirm the assertion of the apostle. But when he explains himself, what does this amount to? Why, just to nothing. He forgets the purification of heaven; and instead of it, insists on a subject which implies that heaven is absolutely pure; namely, upon purifying our prayers and praises from the pollutions cleaving to them, and cleansing our persons from defilements which they had contracted, in order that they may be sufficiently pure for entering into heaven, a place of unspotted purity. And to add to this absurd conduct, he concludes, as if he had really kept close to the apostle's declaration, by

saying, "Here he"—Christ—"is said to purify and prepare these heavenly mansions for us."

I cannot refrain from presenting to the reader the solution of this difficulty which Dr. Sykes gives us in his commentary, as it will shew, that whatever a man's opinions be, whether he "twist the cord" of human invention at the orthodox or heterodox "end," this interpretation is equally intractable. His words are, "The more excellent places or things are, the more respect and the greater regard is to be paid them. The copies and patterns were purified and dedicated to God, and made fit for service, by means of the blood of beasts: but the heavenly things themselves by much more valuable sacrifices than these." He means by the one, more valuable sacrifice of Christ.

"But then," continues he, "what are these heavenly things themselves, which were to be cleansed? Or what necessity is there to purify or cleanse the true holy of holies into which Christ has entered for us? Or was there any thing impure in heaven before Christ ascended thither to remove it? I answer: It is certain that heaven cannot be said properly to be cleansed or purified, because in that is no impurity, nor can any thing unclean enter into it. These terms, then, can only signify something analogous to what purification or cleansing was, in respect of the earthly tabernacle erected in the wilderness. For as a comparison is made all along between Christ and the Jewish high-priest, the holy of holies in the tabernacle, and the true holy of holies; the entrance of the one once every year, and the entrance of the other once for all; so there is some-

thing analogous in the purification of each. As, therefore, the purification of the tabernacle and its vessels was the fitting and preparing each of them for the uses they were respectively designed, so the purification or cleansing of the heavenly things themselves, or the heavenly places into which Christ entered, was the opening of them for all, the granting free access to all, the fitting them for all that come to God through him. This was all done by means of a much better sacrifice than what the Jewish high-priest ever offered; and the effects of it are much more considerable than what was obtained by him."

In answer to this long and really ingenious quotation, I observe, that after all the acuteness which the writer displays, he does nothing but explain away the meaning of the apostle, and substitutes a meaning of his own in its place. To open heavenly places for all—to grant free access to all—and even, to fit them for all, are things so very different from cleansing or purifying heaven from pollution, that nothing more need be said upon them. It cannot escape observation too, that to open heaven and give free access to it, are things which, as I formerly said, Christ neither did, nor could accomplish by his death. Heaven, I must again repeat, was equally open to the good; and the good had equal access to heaven before as after the death of Christ; and I suppose, whatever some men may privately wish, and even induce themselves to believe, none will publicly maintain, that his death opened heaven, and gave free access to the wicked. I may mention likewise, that the expression "to fit them for all," is so general and vague, that one is not sure

what idea to affix to it. If it means to purify and cleanse heaven, it is to the point, and confirms the assertion of the apostle according to the common hypothesis; but then it is in direct contradiction to his own doctrine when he says, that "heaven cannot be said properly to be cleansed or purified, because in heaven is no impurity." Indeed, that the things which he mentions are perfectly different from what the apostle mentions, is evident; for if they were not different they could, no more than it, be said properly, that is, they could not be said at all.

Further: I would wish to know, what this author means, by the analogy which he maintains there was "between the purification of the tabernacle and its vessels, and the purification of heaven, as fitting or preparing them for their respective uses"? That the tabernacle and its vessels, as they were formed of materials which had been employed in common purposes, and which, upon that account, were supposed to have contracted pollution, should be purified for the service of God, I can easily understand, and can perceive the necessity. But that heaven should, in any sense whatever, stand in need of cleansing or of purification for the reception of the saints, is to me perfectly incomprehensible. If it was so pure before, as to render it a proper habitation for angels, no greater purity surely could be requisite to render it a proper habitation for men. But when we remember, that it was the place in which, before the foundations of the world were laid, the Eternal himself, the source and the standard of all perfection and purity, resided, it appears even worse than trifling to speak of purifying it, in order to fit and

prepare it for the reception of men!—In short, it appears to me impossible to avoid the greatest absurdities in the interpretation of this passage, by any other means but by understanding the phrase “heavenly places,” or “things in the heavens,” as descriptive of the gospel dispensation.

But as Sykes was a man of no common abilities; and as the analogy which, with consummate art, he draws, in the quotation lately made, has an imposing appearance; I shall set before the reader, as plainly as possible, what appears to me to be the real analogy which the apostle unfolds upon this symbolical subject. To pave the way for this, I must begin by obviating the following objection.

It will be said, that when the apostle (Heb. ix. 24) observes, “that Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;” it is manifest, that the phrase must be interpreted literally, and cannot be applied to the Christian dispensation.—Here, then, I cordially agree with the doctrine of the objection; the words *αυτον τον ουρανον*, rendered very properly by our translators, *heaven itself*, as well as the reasoning of the apostle, fix their meaning to heaven above; and what is more, do so in contradistinction to *αυτα τα επεγαια*, *the heavenly things*, mentioned in the preceding verse, which are thus likewise ascertained to signify the gospel dispensation.

But further: The circumstance which the apostle mentions from the 18th to the 23d verse is entirely different from that mentioned in the 24th verse. This

is a remark of the greatest importance, as the confounding of these would throw no little obscurity upon this subject. The circumstance alluded to in the first of these passages is the purification of the court and tabernacle, already mentioned, which took place only once when they were erected, and which was done, not by the priest, who was himself only then consecrated, but by Moses. But the circumstance alluded to in the 24th verse, is the entrance of the high-priest into the most holy place, which occurred after the dedication, upon the day of expiation as it is improperly called, and which was to be repeated upon a stated day once every year. Since then these events are perfectly different and independent, no conclusion can be drawn from the one that can be applicable to the other; and the heavenly things, mentioned in the 23d verse, not only may, but must be referred to the gospel dispensation; whilst heaven itself, mentioned in the 24th, not only may, but must be referred to the mansions of glory.—Having thus obviated the objection, I now proceed to develop the analogy which the apostle's reasoning contains; to the performance of which the observation now made will serve as an introduction.

As this is a subject of great importance, it will be necessary, not only to consider it with some minuteness, but to fix in our minds a clear and distinct idea of every step which we take.—I observe, then, that in this epistle, independent of the state of the church before the giving of the law, mention is made of three others which are subsequent to it; of which the second rises in dignity above the first, and the third above the second, in exact proportion to the personal dignity of the

several rulers, who are said to preside respectively over them, amongst whom the same order or gradation is conspicuous. The reason why the patriarchal age is not included in this enumeration, as it was upon another occasion formerly mentioned, is not because the worship which was then offered to the Supreme Being was not authorized by him,\* but because he employed no particular person as his agent or messenger in its establishment. Of the three which are now to be considered, the first is the Jewish dispensation, adumbrated by the first division of the tabernacle, or holy place; called, in the first verse of this chapter, *το ἅγιον κοσμικον*, *a worldly sanctuary*. This epithet was applied to it, not as Warburton and many others imagine, because the same rites were performed in it to the true God, as were performed by the heathen world in their temples to idols; but in contradistinction to *τα επερανια*, *the heavenly things*, or the gospel; and because all its promises and threatenings, all its hopes and fears, terminated in this world.—The second that is mentioned by the apostle, is the Christian dispensation, adumbrated by the second division of the tabernacle, or the most holy place, and called *τα επερανια*, *things in heaven*, not as many imagine, because they resemble things in heaven; which is most absurd, but in contradistinction to *το ἅγιον κοσμικον*, *the worldly sanctuary*; and because all its promises and threatenings, all its hopes and fears, terminate in heaven.—The third and last—for I call it a state of religion for the sake of perspicuity—the third and last is heaven itself, mentioned in the verse under review, which, as it does not belong to time, is not yet adumbrated by any symbol; for symbols, as



well as prophecies, have their realities in this world, and have no relation to the world to come.

Over the first of these, then, according to the words of this apostle in the beginning of the third chapter, Moses presided, "who was faithful in all his house," or the Jewish dispensation, "as a servant." Over the second, according to the same passage, Christ presided, "who was also faithful over his house," or the gospel dispensation, "as a son." But over the third, God himself presides.—But we ought still to remember, that though the administration of the first was given to Moses, and the administration of the second to Christ, yet they were only "appointed," as we are told in the second verse, by God, who, as St. Paul says, "is above all, and through all, and in all;" for though "Christ certainly was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, yet he that built all things is God."—Pursuing, then, this just and beautiful order, which is entirely lost in the common interpretation, I would remark, that these are preparatory and introductory each to the other. The dispensation of Moses was preparatory and introductory to that of Christ: hence, when his ministry was accomplished, he delivered his authority into the hand of his successor: and as the dispensation of Christ is preparatory and introductory to that of God, we have the authority of St. Paul (1 Cor. xx. 24) for affirming, that when his ministration shall be accomplished, he shall also deliver up his authority into the hand of his Father, "that God may be all in all."

But the parallelism is not yet fully brought forward.—What was it that separated the first division of the ~~tabernacle~~ tabernacle from the second—or precluded the worship-

pers in the first from entering into the second? It was the second veil: for as the first veil separated the Jews from the Gentiles as a people, so the second veil separated the Jews from the Christians as a church. Again: what is it that separates the Christian dispensation from heaven, or precludes the worshippers in the second from entering into the third? It is the body—"for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." What the veil, then, was to the Jews, the flesh is to Christians; and if it was necessary that the former should be rent to pieces before the Jews could enter into the happiness of the dispensation of Christ, it is no less necessary that the latter should be rent to pieces before the Christians can enter into heaven itself.—It is worthy of particular observation, that this beautiful and just analogy is clearly mentioned by the author of this Epistle; and likewise, that the mentioning of it, as well as of several similar circumstances, has been too often represented, both by the friends and enemies of Christianity, as tending to set aside his claim to our unqualified belief, as proofs of his regard to Jewish fable and unfounded allegory.

The passage to which I here allude, is the following (Heb. x. 19, 20): "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."—Here, then, the apostle evidently declares, that what the holiest of all was to the Jews during the time that they remained and worshipped in the first division of the tabernacle, heaven is to the Christians during the time that they remain and worship in the second; and that

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what the veil was to the Jews, the flesh is to the Christians. As, therefore, the high-priest of the first dispensation entered within the veil, with the blood of that sacrifice which sanctified his people, into the second, "to signify that the way into the second was not yet made manifest, while as the first dispensation remained;" but that, whenever the service of the first was completely finished, the worshippers in the first would be admitted into the second;—so Christ, the high-priest of the second dispensation, entered through the veil, that is, his flesh, with the blood of that sacrifice which sanctifieth his people, into the third, even into heaven itself, to signify that the way into heaven itself is not yet made manifest, while as the second dispensation remains, that is, while men live; but that, whenever the service of the second is completely finished, the worshippers in the second shall be admitted into the third.—To make myself perfectly understood upon a subject as important as it is new, I observe, that the apostle's reasoning is shortly this: As the Jewish high-priest, with the blood which cleansed the people of his dispensation, went beyond it, through the veil, into the Christian dispensation, to which his own was only preparatory, in order to inspire his brethren with the hope of entering into the possession of its superior privileges whenever the first should be laid aside, which would be done whenever they were prepared for it;—so the Christian high-priest, with the blood which cleansed the people of his dispensation, went beyond it, through the veil of his flesh, into heaven itself, to which his own is only preparatory, in order to inspire his brethren with the better hope of entering into the possession of

the superior privileges of heaven, whenever the Christian dispensation should be laid aside, which would be done at death, whenever they should be prepared for it.

But it may be said, that there is one part of this parallelism, mentioned by the apostle, which I have not attended to, and which seems to militate against my interpretation. That is, the parallelism between the tabernacle in which the Jewish high-priest ministered, and the tabernacle in which the Christian high-priest ministered—the former, a tabernacle made by hands, and pitched by man; the latter, a tabernacle made without hands, and pitched by God. The passages which contain this analogy are the following (Heb. viii. 1, 2): “Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: we have such an high-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” And Heb. ix. 11: “But Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.”

On these quotations, I would observe, that there appear to me strong reasons for suspecting, that when the apostle says, “that our high-priest is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens,” he has no respect to the glory which our Saviour undoubtedly enjoys in heaven itself, but to the power and authority which he has received from his Father to be the founder and governor of the things in heaven, that is, of the Christian church in this world. I am not now to enter into any formal proof of this doctrine, as

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it would lead me too far from the main question, and as it is not absolutely necessary to my argument. I may mention, however, that the same symbolical description is given of our Saviour's exaltation in the fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Revelation, in such a manner as cannot be misunderstood. The throne—mark the expression—the throne, which is there said to be set in heaven, is allowed by all commentators to refer, not to the mansions of glory, but to the supreme government of the Christian church on earth.—He that sat upon the throne must be God himself; for he is clearly distinguished from the Lamb, the symbol of our Saviour, who, from the seventh verse of the fifth chapter, appears to be at his right hand, as he is represented in the passage before us.—It is also deserving of notice, that the song recorded in the thirteenth verse alludes to the same circumstances: “Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.” The same rules of interpretation which induce us to explain these expressions in the book of Revelation as referring to the gospel dispensation on earth, will, I apprehend, induce every candid mind to explain the same expressions in the Epistle to the Hebrews in the same manner.

As the opinion here proposed will illustrate Ephes. i. 20, &c., and will receive illustration from it in return, I shall transcribe that passage, with a few remarks upon it. The apostle, in the preceding verses, having said, “I cease not to pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ may enlighten the eyes of your understanding, that ye may know the exceeding greatness of his love

to us-ward"—to advance our happiness—"who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead"—and thus gave us an undoubted proof that the same power would be exerted to raise us from the dead in the same manner—"and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places"—in the gospel dispensation, or church, as it is afterward explained—"far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, (Gr., *age*,) but also in that which is to come"—none else exercising any power in the Christian dispensation but himself, or those to whom he delegates it—"and hath put all things under his feet"—a phrase which must refer to this world, as it is only applied to enemies, and as it is explained in this manner by the apostle himself, 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28,—“and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of Him”—the Father—"that filleth all in all."—This last phrase in the end of the twenty-second verse, is perfectly decisive in my favour. The honour to which Christ is exalted, is to be the head of the church of God. But where is it that he acts in that capacity? Certainly where his church is—in this world. Hence, here, the words "heavenly places" are to be taken figuratively, as they are in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as descriptive of the gospel dispensation.

Leaving this, as a point not absolutely necessary to the question at issue, let us now consider what the apostle means by "the true tabernacle, which God pitched, and not man." I have no hesitation in declaring, that it appears evident that the apostle employs

this figurative expression to denote the Christian church in this world, over which Christ is set at the right hand of his Father.—There are, however, two other opinions respecting this passage which it will be necessary to mention.—Whitby, a name deservedly revered in the church of Christ, strenuously contends that this tabernacle signifies heaven itself. He was led to this interpretation by understanding the words *τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, *heavenly things* or *places*, literally, when he ought to have understood them figuratively, as I have formerly proved; and hence, had he understood the words rightly, had his premises been just, the reasoning which conducted him to his conclusion, would have conducted him to the conclusion which I maintain.—Sykes, a name to which the student of scripture is also deeply indebted, is equally certain that the more perfect tabernacle was our Saviour's body. It is probable that he was led to adopt this opinion by mistaking a figurative for a literal expression, as Whitby also had done. In the passage (Ephes. i. 20, &c.) lately explained, Paul speaks of the body of Christ, but it is clear that he has no respect to his real body, but to his church. This, perhaps, or some similar expression, Sykes understood literally, and hence originated his error. To him, therefore, is applicable what I formerly applied to Whitby, that if he had understood the word properly, if his premises had been just, he would have come to the conclusion which I support.

Having thus opened the way to the main question, I beg the reader to remember, that from the second verse of the chapter, we concluded formerly, that by the house over which Moses was faithful, we were to

understand the Jewish church, adumbrated by the first division of the tabernacle. He ought likewise to recollect, that from the apostle's subsequent reasoning, we also concluded, that by the house over which Christ was faithful, we were to understand the Christian church, adumbrated by the second division of the tabernacle. The second tabernacle, therefore, the house over which Christ was faithful, and the Christian church, are thus identified, and become synonymous terms. Keeping this in mind, it is evident that when, in the sixth verse, the inspired writer says; "Christ (is faithful) as a son over his own house, whose house are we," he might, with equal propriety, have said, "Christ (is faithful) as a son over his own tabernacle, whose tabernacle are we." This, then, is perfectly decisive in my favour: the house or tabernacle over which Christ presides, or in which he officiates, is the Christian church, composed, as the apostle says, of his people.

I beg leave to remark, that the Scriptures abound with passages illustrative of this.—To the Corinthians, (1 Cor. iii. 9,) Paul says, "Ye are God's building:" and, at the sixteenth verse, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?"—where the apostle, for the obvious reason that in his time the tabernacle was superseded by the temple, employs the latter term, but his meaning is the same as if he had employed the former. 2 Cor. vi. 16, is equally pertinent: "Ye are the temple of the living God." 1 Tim. iii. 15, is no less apposite: "These things I write unto thee—that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." I



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conclude with 1 Pet. ii. 5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices."—The Christian church, then, was this "house," this "temple," "this true and more perfect tabernacle," not made with hands, but built by God, as every spiritual building must be. Here, then, Christ officiated while he continued on earth, and through or from this more perfect tabernacle, he passed into heaven itself when he departed from this world.

Against this interpretation, I can only think of two objections, to which I will now advert.—It may be said, that, according to this interpretation, there is an error in the apostle's reasoning—that the most holy place which was the symbol of the Christian church, was made with hands, as well as the holy place which was the symbol of the Jewish church; and, therefore, Christ officiated in a tabernacle made with hands, as well as the Jewish high-priest. Or, to take a different view of the subject,—as the Jewish church was formed and established by God, as well as the Christian church, the Jewish high-priest officiated in a tabernacle not made with hands, as well as the Christian high-priest.—To obviate this objection, I would remark, that the foundation upon which it rests may be admitted, but the conclusion which is drawn from it does not legitimately follow. I readily acknowledge, that the first and second tabernacles were the symbols of the first and second covenants—or, to retain the language of the objection, of the Jewish and Christian churches; but it ought to be remembered, that the apostle is here speaking, not of the symbols of the two churches, but

of the places in which the high-priests of the two churches did officiate. Now, the first tabernacle was not only the symbol of the Jewish church, but was also the place in which the Jewish high-priest continually officiated—the place, too, it ought to be remarked, from whence he entered within the veil. But the second tabernacle, though it was the symbol of the Christian church, which is all that I maintain, was not the place in which the Christian high-priest ever officiated, nor from whence he entered within the veil—that is, into heaven itself. This, then, being the point upon which the apostle's comparison and reasoning entirely depend, every objection which can have the least weight against them, must have a reference to this point. The objection before us, however, does not, and hence it is altogether nugatory. The truth is, the symbol of the Christian church, as well as that of the Jewish, was certainly a tabernacle made with hands. But the place where the Christian high-priest officiated was not made with hands, like that in which the Jewish high-priest officiated, but was a place not made with hands, a place of God's building, even the church itself.

I must observe, that the expressions which the Scriptures employ concerning these two different places are so pointedly different, that I cannot refrain from citing a few of them. Speaking of the place in which the Jewish high-priest was to offer up his devotions for himself and the people, Moses says, (Deut. xii. 13, 14,) “Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest; but in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy

tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there shalt thou do all that I command thee.”—As this fixed the tabernacle to a certain tribe, the following fixed every act of public worship to the tabernacle. Lev. xxii. 3, 4: “What man soever there be of the house of Israel that killeth (in sacrifice) an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, blood shall be imputed unto that man: he hath shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people.” How very different from this is the account which is given of the place in which the Christian high-priest was to officiate!—Mal. i. 11: “From the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering.” Our Saviour, too, insists upon the same circumstance, John iv. 21, 23: “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither on this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father:—but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” And still more pointedly, Matt. xviii. 20: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”—Whilst, therefore, in one single place only, in the tabernacle made with hands, the Jewish high-priest could engage in the public worship of God, the Christian high-priest could engage in the discharge of his office in every place where his church was found.

His church, then, commenced at the moment of his resurrection: in it, therefore—among his disciples and followers—he continued to officiate, instructing them in all things concerning his religion during the period of his abode on earth; and from it he entered within the veil, that is, ascended to heaven. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of mentioning, as a circumstance equally convincing and comforting, that as the great office of our high-priest was “to bless his people by turning them away from their iniquities,” so we are told that this was the very office which he was performing in his church—in the tabernacle not made with hands—when he entered within the veil, into heaven. The whole of the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke ought to be consulted upon this animating subject. I transcribe only the three following verses (49—51): “And behold,” says our Lord to his disciples, “I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.—And he led them out as far as to Bethany; and he lifted up his hands and blessed them: and it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”

The other objection to which I alluded, is the following: It may be said, that the fourth verse of the eighth chapter, which clearly implies that our Saviour is not now on earth, is incompatible with my doctrine, which, by the tabernacle in which he officiated, understands his church on earth. But it ought to be remembered, that, in the former part of this chapter, in which the apostle says, “that Christ was a minister of the true tabernacle,” he refers to the period only that

Christ remained on earth, during which, as I have already said, he did officiate in his church. But it is evident that when he went within the veil, into heaven, he was not to return back again, as the Jewish high-priest constantly did. Here, then, the parallelism fails. But it is worthy of remark, that this failure is marked by the inspired writer, so that he informs us both where we are to find an analogy or parallelism, and where we are not. "For Christ," says he, (Heb. ix. 24, 25,) "is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place (the most holy) every year with blood of others." The meaning of this is—The Jewish high-priest went beyond his dispensation into the holy of holies, a place made with hands, though the thing signified by it, the Christian church, the true tabernacle, in which our Lord officiated, was not. But our high-priest, when he went beyond his dispensation, went into heaven itself, to appear, not as the Jewish high-priest did, before the symbol of the divine presence only, but before the presence of God himself. And being an high-priest, not according to the order of Aaron, but according to the order of Melchisedec, he had no occasion to return and offer himself often, "for then must he have often suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world"—(Gr., *ages*,) that is, the patriarchal and Jewish ages—"hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and" inasmuch "as it is appointed unto all men once to die"—to go through the

veil of the flesh as their forerunner did—" but after this judgment ; so Christ was once offered"—once died to be their leader in all things—" to bear away"—like the scape-goat, as will be afterward explained—" the sins of many"—of all who improve his death to that important purpose—" and unto them that look for him"—as the Jews looked for the return of their high-priest from the most holy place—" shall he appear the second time"—not like the Jewish high-priest, to offer again another sin-offering—" but without a sin-offering unto salvation"—to complete the salvation of his people by delivering them from death, the last enemy that shall be destroyed.—Such, then, is the clear and consistent reasoning of the apostle.

This leads me to a remark of great importance, which naturally suggests itself. It is evident from the whole reasoning of the apostle, that the way, mentioned Heb. x. 19, 20, which Christ has opened and consecrated by his blood, is the way or entrance into the gospel dispensation. The reason why commentators embrace a different opinion, is their not considering that the holy of holies was not the symbol of heaven, but the symbol of the Christian church. Not merely the parallelism, which we have traced with the greatest ease and the greatness exactness, contradicts the common hypothesis and proves my doctrine, but the reasoning of the apostle afterward does the same. " Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest of all"—the Christian dispensation—" by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high-priest over the house of God; let

us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." Here he speaks of their entrance into the holiest, not as a thing which was afterward to take place, but as a thing which had already taken place, and had taken place at the death of Christ. But we formerly said, that the way into heaven itself was as open to the righteous before as after the death of Christ. Indeed, this is a fact, than which nothing is more certain in religion. To make an inspired apostle, then, say, that the death of Christ opened an entrance into heaven, when that entrance was opened from the creation of the world, can serve no purpose but to expose the Scriptures to contempt and ridicule. The declaration, too, that Christ is an high-priest over the house of God, clearly refers to the church in this world; and the influence which this consideration ought to have upon their conduct, as described in the twenty-second verse, is only compatible with a state of imperfection, in which they should still aspire to greater purity of heart and of life. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that since heaven was always open to the good, no new motive to constancy and diligence in the practice of religion could be drawn from it. But that a new and living way was opened by our Saviour's death into the kingdom of heaven—the gospel dispensation—which John the Baptist, and our Saviour himself, declared to be only at hand—was not only a powerful, but a new motive to perseverance and diligence. I must remark, however, that though I deny that the death of Christ opened.

the way into heaven, for the best of all reasons, namely, that it was open equally before as after, yet I cheerfully acknowledge, that the resurrection and subsequent ascension of our Saviour, greatly strengthened the natural hopes of future happiness, and brought life and immortality much more clearly to view than they had ever been before. But every person, who has been at all accustomed to distinguish things that differ, will at once perceive, that the death of Christ and the entrance which it opened into the gospel dispensation, are things perfectly distinct and different from the resurrection of Christ, and the hopes that it gives us of immortal felicity.

Indeed, the whole of the apostle's reasoning refers to that wonderful event, which took place at the moment of our Lord's death, when the veil of his flesh was rent asunder, and likewise the veil of the temple. While the veil of the temple remained entire, the Jews worshipped in the holy place, and their high-priest went once every year into the most holy, not to open the way into it, which was to be done only at the rending asunder of the veil, but to confirm their hopes, that when their dispensation was finished, they, in imitation of their forerunner, would enter into a better, even into the gospel dispensation. When, therefore, the Jewish dispensation was finished, when the veil of the temple was rent asunder, the Jews went into the holiest of all, where their forerunner had formerly gone once every year; and then the high-priest of this new dispensation—the Christian church—immediately went through another veil, even the veil of his flesh, into heaven itself, as their forerunner; not to open hea-



ven to them, any more than the entrance of the Jewish high-priest opened the Christian dispensation to that people, but to strengthen and confirm their hopes that when their ministry in the gospel dispensation should be accomplished, they would likewise enter through the same veil of the flesh into heaven above.

This, then, is the grand key which opens all the subsequent reasonings of the apostle respecting faith. The Jews, during their dispensation, which was preparatory to the gospel, were induced, by seeing their high-priest enter through the veil of the tabernacle into the most holy place, to cast an eye into futurity, and to walk by the faith of good things to come. The Christians, during their dispensation, which, in the same manner, is preparatory to heaven, are induced, by seeing their high-priest enter through the veil of his tabernacle, to cast an eye into futurity, and to walk by the faith of good things to come. But to the Jews, the good things to come were the blessings of the gospel; whereas to the Christians, the good things to come are the blessings of heaven. Hence the gospel is said to be founded on better promises, and to bring in better hopes.

I cannot conclude this long and interesting inquiry, without suggesting an observation which has frequently obtruded itself upon my mind in the course of it.—If the argument derived from the fulfilment of our Saviour's prophecy, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, is decisive in favour of the divine origin of Christianity; the argument resulting from the wisdom and design exhibited in the court and tabernacle, with the utensils belonging to them, is not only of a similar kind, but is

equally decisive in favour of Judaism. If I do not ~~greatly~~ deceive myself, the number and the nature of the symbols employed in both cases, must have required the same wisdom and prescience in their contrivance and adjustment: and hence, the fulfilment of the latter, to use that phrase respecting symbolic representation, is equally clear and forcible, as the fulfilment of prophecy.—It is an important fact too, that in the case before us, there can be no room for the objection, which has oftentimes been brought forward against prophecy, that the prediction was uttered subsequent to the event. That the court and tabernacle were really constructed at the time, and in the manner, recorded by Moses, can admit of no doubt. That the most surprising part of the parallelism between the sign and the thing signified, belongs to the second division of the tabernacle; and that it could not be discovered by human sagacity, till after the death and ascension of our Saviour, is equally evident. And since the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the only Jewish or Christian writer, who has given us any account of this subject, that deserves to be attended to, every pretence of collusion is for ever cut off. When I consider, that these symbols themselves, as well as the explanation given of them in the Epistle alluded to, have oftentimes been brought forward by the enemies of revelation against its truth; when I consider likewise, that upon account of the ignorant and absurd interpretations which have been given of both, the friends of revelation have almost abandoned the cause to the enemy; I cannot but feel a sensible pleasure in the hope, that the interpretation here given, may prove that the triumph of the one,

and the fears of the other, are equally unfounded. If the subject, thus elucidated, prove none of the weakest arguments for the religion which we profess, it ought not to be forgotten, that religion has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, from free and impartial discussion. Had the authoritative decrees of any council or assembly, who have presumed, in times of ignorance and dogmatism, to confine the understandings of all posterity within the narrow range of their own inquiries, determined the meaning and import of the various symbols which have fallen under our review, in the same manner as they have determined many doctrines of the religion of Jesus, of which they were equally ignorant, the present interpretation, perhaps, would not have made its appearance at this time. If it be true, what some writers of great abilities have maintained, that, in many cases, men must run through the whole circle of error before they arrive at, and rest in the truth, it follows, that the more open the field of inquiry is left, even to the wanderings of genius, which seldom, if ever, are altogether in vain, the sooner will the sum of error be exhausted, and the sooner will the temple of truth be revealed to view. Should this require some little limitation, yet still one thing is certain, from the history of every age and country, and from the nature of the thing itself, that human creeds, sanctioned by penal statutes, have ever been the bane of truth and the support of error; and that if ever the throne of error and wickedness is to be destroyed, and the throne of truth and righteousness is to be established, it must be by giving to the ministers of religion, who from their education and habits are qualified to

elucidate the Scriptures, the full and unrestrained liberty of preaching and publishing to the world whatever they think they can prove from scripture, without the fear of any other punishment, but what is legitimately fixed by God himself to every failure—the inevitable disgrace which sooner or later must attend ignorance and error, when exposed to an intelligent and inquiring public.



## SECTION IV.

*Of the Meaning and Import of Sacrifices.*

I AM now to elucidate the different sacrifices which were appointed to the Jews—a subject which, on account of the doctrines which have been deduced from it, and the disputes to which it has given birth, is by far the most interesting part of this Essay. It appears to me, that all the sacrifices, which can boast of a divine origin, may be comprehended under sin-offerings, and burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings. I am far from thinking that this enumeration is so perfect as to include in it, with the same propriety, every particular sacrifice appointed by God; but it will answer the chief purpose which I have in view—it will confine my inquiries within some determinate limits, and give a more distinct and discriminating idea of the subject to the mind of the reader, than otherwise I could do. It will hardly be necessary to mention, that I include in the class of sin-offerings, those that were denominated trespass-offerings; and in the class of peace-offerings, those that were called thank-offerings: because, though these differed in some circumstances from the respective classes to which I assign them, yet that difference is so minute, that the observations which I am to make upon the classes in general, will explain every particular sacrifice. But as the attention of theologists has been principally directed to sin-offerings and to burnt-offerings, inasmuch as

these have been thought most favourable to certain ~~doctrines~~ of more than doubtful origin, I shall, without neglecting sacrifices in general, endeavour to explain their nature and import with all that minuteness which their own importance, as well as the subjects connected with them, evidently demands.

As a foundation, then, for all my future reasonings upon this subject, I ~~would~~ remark, that the great end which God appears to me to have had in view when he appointed sacrifices, was, in a symbolical manner, to give the offerer information of the temper and conduct, which it was necessary for him to display, in order that he might be a proper object of divine benevolence and mercy, and be qualified for a nobler state of existence. Hence it follows, that these symbols ought to have been different, both in the names which were imposed upon them, and in the rites which attended their immolation, that they might properly represent the different dispositions which animate the heart, and the different virtues which dignify the character. Agreeably to this observation, I apprehend, it is evident, that the sin-offering was appointed to be a symbol of the offerer's devoting sin to death — the burnt-offering, of his devoting himself to the service of God—and the peace-offering, of the peace and happiness which he afterwards enjoyed.—The first, then, represented his sanctification, or his being dead to sin—the second, his justification, or his being alive to righteousness — and the third, that tranquillity and joy which he must have experienced, who, in the scriptural sense of these words, was thus sanctified and justified—in whom the body of sin was destroyed, and

in whom the life of Jesus was manifested. Hence, the great intention of these symbols was fulfilled in the Jews, and terminated in their own improvement. Hence, instead of being appointed to direct their view to the dispensation of Christ, they were appointed to direct their views to the moral or spiritual part of their own dispensation. And hence, instead of informing them, that they were to look to the sacrifice which Christ was afterward to offer to God, in order to procure for them the pardon of their sins, and the acceptance of their persons; they informed them, that upon their "putting sin to death," their sin would be forgiven; that upon their "offering up of themselves living sacrifices" to God, God would accept of them; and, that upon their "ceasing to do evil and learning to do well," peace and happiness would be their portion.

That this account of sacrifices, though entirely new, is perfectly consistent with the moral attributes of God, and with the nature of the Mosaic economy, every person must at once perceive. From the reasoning formerly adduced, it appeared, that as the minds of the Jews were so rude and ignorant as to be unable to profit by a pure and spiritual religion, the Supreme Being, in condescension to their weakness, appointed external ceremonies to assist their understandings in the conception of moral duty, and to remind them continually of the necessity of performing it. Sacrifices, therefore, were employed by God, in the early ages of the world, for the same purpose that parables were afterward employed by our Saviour—to instruct a blind and stubborn people, who, either from the ignorance of their

understandings, could not, or from the obstinacy of their wills, would not, receive spiritual and divine truths, in all their naked beauty and majesty. When, therefore, in reference to this intention, these ceremonies are said in scripture to be a veil, it is evident that the language is metaphorical; and that it ought to be understood in consistency with the nature and design of the subject to which it is applied. To say, without a figure, that the ceremonial part of the Mosaic economy was employed as a veil to the moral part of it, would be to assert that the design of the Supreme Being was to conceal the latter from the view. The design of the Supreme Being was the very reverse. As it is necessary to interpose a thin veil of clouds to shroud the effulgence of the meridian sun, which would otherwise strike us blind, when we gaze upon it; so was it necessary to throw the veil of ceremonies over the moral part of the Jewish dispensation, to make it a proper object of sight to the Jews, whose weak and diseased eyes were unable to look upon it in all its dazzling splendour.—Sacrifices, in short,\* were to the Jews, whom God was instructing in the first principles of morality and religion, what diagrams are to those who are beginning the study of mathematics—they are calculated, by their sensible properties, to enable the mind to form distinct conceptions of abstract truths which they are designed to represent.

The names which were given to these sacrifices, first demand our attention. That in ancient times, names were imposed on persons and things, not merely to distinguish them from one another, but to describe their nature and import, is a fact which will not be contested.



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The names, therefore, which, borrowed from a most expressive language, were assigned, by the Almighty, to these sacrifices, will, I imagine, in no inconsiderable degree, militate against the common interpretation of these symbols and support the interpretation which I propose. If, as has been generally maintained, the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering, had all one common import—had all a reference to sin, we should naturally expect that the names, not to mention the ceremonies attending them, would have been the same, and would have indicated that reference. Indeed, this single circumstance appears to me perfectly decisive upon the point. We may be certain, that God, in the most proper manner, would adapt the sign to the thing signified. To adumbrate one and the same thing, therefore, only one and the same symbol could be necessary—for to any thing which is proper for accomplishing its end, nothing more needs to be added. That three kinds of sacrifices were appointed by God, to which names entirely different were assigned, is as clear an indication, as the nature of the subject will admit, that they adumbrated subjects entirely different.

It is a circumstance of the very first importance, that in the original of the Old Testament, where the sin-offering is mentioned, there is no Hebrew word corresponding to the English word *offering*. This is an addition, which our translators have uniformly subjoined to the original, by their own authority, and what is more, an addition which they have never once marked by the difference of character. The victim is constantly denominated חטאת, *sin*, but never *sin-offer-*

*ing*. This, however, occasions no ambiguity—the other terms of the sentence, generally, give intimation, when the word is employed to denote the victim which the sinner offered, and when it refers to the sin for which he offered it. In the latter case, too, the word is feminine, as it is naturally from its termination: in the former case, it is masculine; and changes its sex, if I may be allowed the expression, in conformity to the sex of the victims, which for the most part were males. This circumstance, in the view which I am giving of the subject, is not only expressive, but just; for, as the victim represented sin, it assumed the name of what it represented; and hence, when the sinner offered up his victim, he really offered up his sin, as a sacrifice, at the command of God.

But in the interpretation of a term of such importance, we are not left to conjecture:—similar expressions are by no means uncommon in the symbolical language of scripture, and it is astonishing that they have never once been employed to elucidate the point in question. To avoid prolixity, I shall enumerate a few of these, without almost any comment, as I am convinced that the reader must at once perceive their force.—When Joseph says to Pharaoh, (Gen. xli. 26, 27,) “The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; and the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east-wind, shall be seven years of famine;” does he not plainly and explicitly tell the king, that the kine and the stalks of corn were the appointed symbols of years? Again: when the same person said to the butler and

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baker of Pharaoh, who had told him their dreams, (Gen. xl. 12, 18,) "The three branches are ~~three~~ days," and "the three baskets are three days;" is it not self-evident that the branches and baskets were symbols of days?—When Daniel (iv. 20, 22) says to Belteshazzar, "The tree which thou sawest, is thou, O king!" does he not clearly assert that the tree was the symbol of that monarch?—When the angel said to Daniel, (vii. 17,) who wished to know the meaning and import of the beasts which he had seen in vision, "These great beasts which are four, are four kings;" does he not infallibly intimate that they were emblems of them?—And, to produce no more, when the angel said to John, (Rev. xvii. 9,) "The seven heads are seven mountains;" and 12, "The ten horns are ten kings;" and 15, "The waters are peoples and multitudes;" and 18, "The woman is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" does not he, beyond the possibility of a doubt, declare, that the heads, the horns, the waters, and the woman, were all symbols of their respective realities?—What, then, would you think of that interpreter, who should maintain, that these were symbols of other things, perfectly different; and of which the Scriptures gave not the least intimation? For instance, that the kine of Pharaoh represented the kine of the Philistines, (1 Sam. vi. 7,) which drew the ark of God to its own country; that Belteshazzar's tree was the emblem of the tree mentioned Rev. xxii. 2; that the wild beasts of Daniel were symbols of the wild beasts, mentioned Rev. xiii. 1, 11; or, to come to a case perfectly parallel, that the ten horns in Daniel, vii. 24, were emblems of the ten horns of

John, Rev. xvii. 12, though it is evident, that both were emblems of the same realities, namely, of ten kings, to which the Scriptures refer them. I add, that if these examples establish my interpretation—and I am confident that they infallibly establish it—they must, at the same time, overturn every doctrine that is in opposition to it.

But to set this point, which I look upon as of the very first importance, beyond the possibility of dispute, I have reserved one example to this place—an example, which will not only elucidate and confirm the interpretation here given of the sin-offering; but will receive elucidation and confirmation from it in return. When our Saviour instituted his supper—a symbolical rite exactly similar, in every respect, to the ceremonies of the Mosaic economy—he said of the bread, “This is my body”; and of the wine, “This is my blood.” And why did our Saviour use this mode of expression? Because it was the mode of expression which, from the beginning of the Jewish dispensation, had been appropriated to the institution of similar rites, and could not therefore be misunderstood by Jews, to whom he addressed himself. I cannot but mention too, that as the bread and wine represented his body and blood, they took the name of what they represented; and hence, St. Paul, even after our Saviour had ascended to heaven, could say, with the greatest propriety, to the Corinthians, “Whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” It is with some satisfaction that I add, that as one error naturally leads to others, so one truth as

naturally tends to establish more. Had the doctrine, which I am now confirming, been seen and felt by the Church of Rome, when about to establish transubstantiation, would she have ventured upon that absurdity? To have preserved consistency, she must also have decreed, that the victim, which was offered in sacrifice under the law for sin, was also transubstantiated, was no longer a lamb, or a kid, or a bullock, but a sin; and hence, that the priests, when they ate their portion of the victim, and imagined that they were really eating flesh, were only feasting “upon a transgression of the law,” upon an abstract idea—a doctrine of no easy digestion truly; but a doctrine that has all the evidence which transubstantiation can boast of, except what it derives from the decree of an infallible church.

But to return. We will now apply this striking example to the point in question. The common interpretation maintains, that the victim represented the sinner; and I maintain, that it represented his sin. Now, as doctrines of the very first importance depend upon the answer which shall be given, I would ask, which of these opinions receives the greatest support from the fact which has now been stated?—When our Saviour says, “This is my body,” and, “This is my blood,” we are morally certain, that the bread and wine, to which he gave these appellations, represented his body and blood, and we should esteem the opinion to be as absurd as transubstantiation itself, that should maintain that they did not represent his body and blood, but other things, to which these words were never applied. This is a circumstance to which I particularly call the attention of my readers—

“ I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say.” When the Scriptures employ the same language, when they say of the different victims, “ This is the sin of the prince—This is the sin of the priest—This is the sin of the people”—is it possible to conceive, that these victims did not represent the particular sins which the prince, the priest, and the people, had at the moment confessed? Had the Scriptures, when speaking of these victims, said, This is the prince—This is the priest—This is the people—the common opinion might have boasted of the strength of its evidence; and I should have been ashamed of controverting a position, which then would have been sanctioned by the unvaried use of language in similar cases, and by the nature of the thing itself. I appeal to the common sense of mankind for the truth and justice of this rule of interpretation; and when I allow to the generally received opinion every advantage which results from it, I have a right to assume it to my own.—Till such time, then, as the principle which I have established, is proved, by an appeal to particular passages, to be without foundation, it must be accounted an established truth, that in the sin-offering, the victim was appointed by God to be the symbol of the sin which the offerer at the time confessed to God.

Indeed, the grounds upon which I build this important and decisive doctrine, are admitted by those who maintain a contrary interpretation. Hence, Dr. Magee, following the crowd of commentators who maintain the same opinions with himself, says, (*Discourses, &c.* Vol. II. p. 235,) “ The use of the word חטאת, *sin*, for a sin-offering, is so familiar, that it can scarcely be necessary

to adduce instances in proof of it;" and he mentions several passages, which have also been noticed by others, where the word is found in this sense, and in which it has been overlooked by our translators. Thus, in Gen. iv. 7, the words, which in our version are translated "sin lieth at the door," are universally allowed to mean, that if Cain had 'sinned, a victim to be offered up, as the emblem of his sin, and as the evidence of his repentance, was couching, as the word signifies, at the very door of his habitation. And in Hosea iv. 8, the phrase, "They eat up the sin of my people," marks the impious wickedness of the priests who, instead of burning the victims which the people offered for, or instead of their sins—an expression explicable upon my principles only—devoured them as common food. Nor is the word, in this sense, unknown to the writers of the New Testament; but as the examples which are found of this, will be adduced afterward, when we explain the sacrifice of Christ, I shall pass them over at present.

Nor will the import which I assign to this term receive small confirmation from the meaning of its etymon, when employed on sacrifice. As the term *חַטָּאת*, *sin*, is the name which the victim always bears, so the verb *חָטָא*, from which the name is derived, expresses the effect which the offering of that victim was said to produce. Now, I would ask, what is the meaning which this verb always bears when thus employed? In every passage, it signifies, *to cleanse, to purify*; and for the most part, it is so rendered by our translators. This is a decisive proof of the truth of my interpretation; for as the victim represented the sin, the death of

the victim must have represented the death of the sin : but it is self-evident, that whenever the sin, which held the sinner in bondage and defiled his heart and conscience, was put to death, it could no longer reign over him, or defile him, and consequently, he must have been cleansed or purified. *Exod. xxix. 36*, in which both the verb and the noun are found in the sense which is here assigned to them, will afford an excellent example to confirm these observations : “ And the bullock, the sin, shalt thou offer on every day of coverings”—or purifications, which were seven—“ and thou shalt cleanse the altar by thy covering it”—by thy purifying. This is the literal translation of the Hebrew : and without explaining the exact import of the term coverings, or purifications, at present, it evidently proves that the bullock, expressly called the sin, was the emblem of that whose name it bore, since the consequence of its death, when accompanied with the death of what it represented, was the cleansing of the altar.

Let us now attend to the burnt-offering. I have already said, that the victim, sacrificed as a burnt-offering, was appointed by God to be the symbol of the offerer's devoting himself to the service of God in the practice of all righteousness. The truth of this assertion will appear, I apprehend, perfectly evident from the name it bears, as well as from every circumstance attending its immolation.

From the verb *עלה*, which signifies *to ascend, to be elevated, to be exalted*, is derived the term *עולה*, or *עלה*, the name which the burnt-offering constantly bears.—As the rites of the Mosaic economy never obtained in



this country, it is easy to see that our language, formed for a very different state of society and of religion, must, in many instances, be deficient in terms exactly corresponding in value to those Hebrew terms which belonged exclusively to the Jewish dispensation. Now, not to repeat what was said upon the sin-offering, that, in the original, there is no word corresponding to the term *offering*, it is of more importance to observe, that the appellation *burnt-offering*, which our translators have employed, is adopted, not from the Hebrew, as it ought to have been, but from the Greek translation of the Septuagint. This is not designed to throw any blame upon our translators; for it was the fault of the language in which they wrote, which did not supply them with a better term. It is, however, to be regretted, that at the time when the Scriptures first appeared in English, a term perfectly equivalent to the original was not formed, and appropriated to this particular sacrifice, which, as many terms employed in that translation must have been then new, would not have struck the reader so forcibly as it would at present, and which, before this time, would have been perfectly naturalized. The Septuagint adopted the word which our translators render *burnt-offering*, because the victim, when burnt, ascends in flame and smoke to heaven. The original word, however, never signifies *to burn*, nor indeed has any respect to burning; its meaning is, as has been already said, *to mount up, to ascend*, in almost any way, as Parkhurst, in his *Lexicon*, remarks; and hence, though the victim was burnt, yet as this was not peculiar to this sacrifice, but took place in all, it does not enter into the idea which the original name

conveys. Were I allowed to form a word expressive of the Hebrew appellation, I would employ the term *ascender*, or some other of similar derivation. The name, therefore, in the most expressive manner, taught the Jews that it was by devoting themselves to the service of God, that their actions of virtue and goodness could ascend up as a sweet savour before his throne; that it was by offering these sacrifices of righteousness, that they could dignify their character, elevate their affections, and exalt their minds above the world—in short, that they could rise to the contemplation, to the likeness, and to the friendship, of the Supreme Being, whilst inhabitants of earth, and at last be exalted to the mansions of immortal felicity, to dwell for ever in his sublime presence.

But though the name of this sacrifice, according to this interpretation, denoted only, that what it adumbrated was to ascend upwards to God, yet the following passage may be thought to indicate that it had a reference, if not expressed, at least implied, to its being burnt upon the altar. In Lev. vi. 8—10 of our translation, and vi. 2—4 of the Hebrew, we are told, that “the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt-offering (it is the burnt-offering because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it): and the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall be put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt-offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.”—I must remark here, that the original is capable of another

translation, which appears to me much more consistent with the context, as well as with many ancient versions, and which does not derive the name of the sacrifice from the circumstance of its being burnt. In our translation, instead of a command, which, from the first clause of the ninth verse, we had every reason to expect, we meet with an explanation, which it is necessary, in order that the passage may convey any meaning, to include in a long and ill-placed parenthesis, and even when we come to the end of it, and enter upon the command, it is nothing to the purpose; at least, it is very imperfectly enunciated, and requires something to make it complete. The following translation is quite literal, and makes the command plain and easy: "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the ascender: it shall ascend from off the burning wood upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it: and the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall be put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the ascender upon the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar."—Whether this version be admitted or not, is a matter of no importance to the import which I assign to the sacrifice, as my interpretation does not depend upon this passage at all. I prefer, however, the translation here given, because it is more consistent with the circumstances of the case, and because it does not derive the name of the sacrifice from its being burnt, which the common translation does, though it is confessed that the Hebrew name has no reference to burning. I have explained the name and

translated the passage from the common and undisputed use of the word, and not from circumstances which have no relation to it.

But though the name is admirably descriptive of those works of moral goodness which every person who devotes himself to the service of God performs, yet as it bears not any immediate reference to the offerer—a circumstance which proved so conclusively that the sin-offering represented sin—it may be thought not to be clear that the victim represented him. In answer to this observation, I would remark, that though the name of the victim, in the sin-offering, indicated the object which it adumbrated much more clearly than the name of the victim in the burnt-offering, yet, I apprehend, this defect of evidence, if I may so call it, is amply compensated by circumstances which are exclusively its own. One of these is, that though the name is not that which the thing signified bears, yet it is descriptive of its nature. It must be something which ascends upwards to God, something which he contemplates with delight, and accepts with pleasure. This not only contracts the sphere of its application, but really confines it to the righteous, whose virtuous actions, like the prayers and alms of Cornelius, “come up for a memorial before God.” To imagine, therefore, that the victim had any reference to sin, is contrary to every rule of legitimate interpretation; and were there not another circumstance to prove this but the name, it would be sufficient. Sin, in every point of view, debases and sinks the character and the person of the sinner to the lowest depths of infamy and destruction even in this world, and instead of ascending

upwards to God, or exalting the person who delights in it to heaven hereafter, it will always descend downwards, and plunge its votaries in the lowest abyss of hell.

But the circumstance to which I chiefly alluded in support of my interpretation, is, that in Lev. i. 3, where a particular description of the burnt-offering is given, it is expressly stated that the victim was to be accepted for, or instead of, the offerer. The words literally run thus: "If his offering be a burnt-offering from the herd, a male without blemish let him offer: at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation shall he offer it, to be accepted for himself before the Lord."—Here, then, we have a proof which supersedes the necessity of all others; for the only meaning which the words can bear is, that God would accept of the victim as the instituted emblem of the person who offered it.

It ought not to be concealed, that our translators have rendered the Hebrew phrase, "of his own voluntary will." This, however, can have no weight with any one who has the least knowledge of the original, which is incapable of that version. Even the mere English reader may be convinced of this, from the consideration that the interpretation which I have given is confirmed, not only by many ancient versions, and by many modern commentators, but even by our own translators, who in the next verse render the same expression, "it shall be accepted for him." Nor is it unworthy of notice, that this translation, which was adopted by Dr. Priestley, is approved by Dr. Magee, though with a design very different indeed from that of his ingenious antagonist. His words are, (Vol. I. p. 377,) "Now, that

the word לרצו, should not be translated, as it is in our common version, *of his own voluntary will*, I admit with Dr. Priestley. It should be rendered, as appears from the use of the word immediately after, and in other parts of scripture, as well as from the Greek, the Chaldee, the Syriac, and the Arabic versions, *for his acceptance* ;” or, as he expresses it in the preceding page, “ *as being accepted for him.*” Now, when men of such different sentiments agree in a point to which their attention and ingenuity were directed and sharpened by controversy, we have every reason to rely upon their decision. Since, then, the Almighty expressly declares, that the burnt-offering was the symbol of the offerer himself, we are compelled to acquiesce with that declaration, and to explain the whole ritual respecting it in consistency with it.

If the names assigned to the sin-offering and burnt-offering, and the express declaration of scripture concerning the latter, confirm the interpretation which I am giving of them, I apprehend the name of the peace-offering will, in the same manner, lead us to its real meaning and import. I have already said, that the peace-offering was appointed by God to be the emblem of that peace and happiness which every person who was “dead to sin and alive to righteousness” must have enjoyed. Now, I would observe, that the verb שָׁלַח, from which the name of the peace-offering is derived, originally signifies *to finish, to perfect, to complete*. From this, the transition is easy and natural to the meaning which it bears in reference to this subject, namely, *to be at peace, to have peace*—when all differences are finished, when reconciliation is perfected, when

happiness is complete. Hence the term שָׁלוֹם, *peace*, a term which implies every temporal and spiritual blessing that is conducive to present or future happiness, is the name which is constantly appropriated to this sacrifice.

The remark which I formerly made upon the sin-offering, and which might have been repeated upon the burnt-offering, is equally applicable to the peace-offering. Indeed, this exact similarity in the manner in which all are denominated, mutually illustrates and confirms the import which I assign to each. In the original, no word is found corresponding to the term *offering*, and hence this victim was called *peace*, as the other was denominated *sin*. Whenever, therefore, we find in our translation the victim denominated the peace-offering of the prince, the peace-offering of the priest, the peace-offering of the people, all that is found in the original is, the peace of the prince, the peace of the priest, the peace of the people. The name, therefore, in the clearest and most convincing manner, marked that the victim was appointed to be the symbol of that of which it bore the name, and that whenever the offerer presented his victim before the Lord, he testified in the most solemn manner his gratitude, and acknowledged, that as all his peace and happiness were derived from God, the fountain of peace and happiness,\* so he was willing to ascribe them to God, and to employ them to his glory.—It will be needless, surely, to enlarge upon a point which has every evidence which the nature of the subject can admit; and I apprehend, that as far as we have advanced, we have not found the least shadow of proof in support of the common hypo-

thesis, that any sacrifice was ever appointed to be the symbol of the sinner, or had the least reference to the death which he either deserved or endured. Indeed, it is evident, that, except the sin-offering, no sacrifice had even any reference to sin at all.

I now design to direct the reader's attention to the order in which the different sacrifices which we are considering were presented before God. In a subject which involves doctrines of the very first importance, nothing is trifling, and the most minute circumstances, from the consequences which may result from them, demand attention. It is a fact, then, that there were certain festivals among the Jews, on which all these different kinds of sacrifices were offered up. Now, if there had been nothing in them which required the nicest discrimination, if they had all one common import, and adumbrated the death which the sinner deserved, there could have been no reason why one sacrifice should precede or follow another, why any settled order should have been observed. Hence it is that, I imagine, an argument of no inconsiderable weight, either for or against any interpretation, according as it is true or false, may be derived from the order in which these sacrifices were constantly presented before the Supreme Being. In every account which the Scriptures give us, we find that they were immolated, not merely in order, but in that very order in which I am considering them. As an indubitable proof of this important circumstance, I would direct the reader's attention to the ninth chapter of Leviticus, where we have an account of the first sacrifices which Aaron offered up for himself and for the people, after his con-



secration. Not only is this order observed in the command given respecting them in the third and fourth verses, but, when this command was executed, we find the same order strictly adhered to. We have first the sin-offering, mentioned in the fifteenth verse; then the burnt-offering is slain, in the sixteenth; and, lastly, the peace-offering, in the eighteenth. Now, I do not say that this order, which is invariably observed, is inconsistent with the common hypothesis, for nothing can be either consistent or inconsistent with an hypothesis which, as it is devoid of all order and symmetry, neither requires nor admits of any. I maintain, however, that if the meaning and import of all these sacrifices had been one and the same, if they had not been distinct and different from one another, this settled order in a subject which, upon this supposition, was without any order, would have been more than inexplicable—would have raised well-grounded suspicions that the subject had been deranged, or was not at all understood. My interpretation has a different character: it comes forward as a whole, composed of parts fitted and adjusted for each other—of a whole, which, when taken to pieces, cannot be put up again in any other way but that which Infinite Wisdom first devised. Here, then, an order and a succession are absolutely necessary; and the more demands of this kind are made, by any interpretation, the more does it expose itself to detection, if false, and the more evidence of its truth does it give when all these demands are satisfied.

Now, I would ask, is the order which my interpretation requires, and that which the Scriptures give, one ~~the same~~? Undoubtedly they are. First, the sin-

offering, expressive of the death of sin, or of sanctification—for the beginning of wisdom is to depart from evil. Secondly, the burnt-offering, expressive of a life of righteousness, or of justification—for, having ceased to do evil, the next thing is to learn to do well. And, lastly, the peace-offering, expressive of that peace and reconciliation which the man enjoys with God, with his neighbour, and with himself, who is freed from sin, who is the servant of righteousness, and who rejoices in the hope of glory. This order is natural, and beautiful, and just. It is an order, too, so consistent with my interpretation, that, were we to reason from that interpretation, without any knowledge of the appointment of God, we should conclude that it would be appointed as absolutely necessary. It could scarcely be expected, I think, that a circumstance so trivial in appearance, would afford evidence so powerfully convincing, on a subject of such importance. But the more minute, and remote, and unexpected, any such adaptation of parts to complete the whole is, the more does it display the wisdom of the great Contriver who disposed them, and the more overpowering is the evidence of the interpretation which discovers that adaptation. I may add, too, that this circumstance is no despicable proof of what I formerly advanced concerning sanctification and justification, in an Essay on these doctrines.

It will scarcely be necessary to state, that the victims employed in all these sacrifices were to be without blemish. This was absolutely necessary to impress the minds of the Hebrews with the important truth, that every duty, every virtue, which they were to per-

form, ought to be perfect—ought to be right in itself, to proceed from right principles, and to be directed to a right end. They were likewise all to be brought to the door of the tabernacle, and there to be presented before the Lord. This gave them information of great importance. It taught the Jews that the duties which these victims adumbrated, were all to be performed in obedience to the command, and in honour of the name, of that God who, during the theocracy, resided, in a peculiar manner, in the tabernacle, and might be said to hold there his court. It likewise taught them, that the performance of these duties was necessary to a nearer access to him; that before they could enter into the sanctuary, they must put sin to death, and devote themselves to God; and that even their civil conduct, their business and conversation with the world, should not only be consistent with the more solemn exercises of religion, but in some measure be preparatory to them. And further, it taught them, that as God was not the author of divisions, they ought all to be united together in one body, and consequently, that all separations, all sects and parties in religion, were contrary to the unity of the Supreme Being, and contrary to the unity of his church.

The ceremony which the Mosaic ritual next brings forward, is the imposition of the hands of the offerer upon the head of his sacrifice. This will require a more elaborate discussion than the topics already mentioned, not because its import is doubtful or obscure, but because it has been perverted from what I believe to have been its real meaning, to support doctrines which have no foundation in scripture or reason—doc-

trines which, by reducing all these evidently different sacrifices to one denomination—to represent the sinner—have rendered a structure simple and beautiful in itself, a heap of ruins, and the religion of Jesus a chaos of absurdity..

Nothing is more evident, I apprehend, than that the offerer laid his hands upon the head of the victim to denote, in the most solemn and impressive manner, the determined purpose, the fixed resolution of his soul, to perform the duties which these symbolical actions adumbrated:—in the sin-offering, that he devoted his sin to death; in the burnt-offering, that he devoted himself to the service of God; and in the peace-offering, that he was animated with the warmest sentiments of gratitude for the goodness of his Creator, and that he would diffuse around him peace and happiness.

According to this interpretation, it is evident, that the imposition of hands had no reference whatever to sin. That this ought to be admitted, is, I think, certain from the consideration that this ceremony was extended to every sacrifice without exception—to the burnt-offering and to the peace-offering, as well as to the sin-offering. To support, on the one side, and to overturn, on the other, doctrines of the very first importance in religion, this simple and obvious ceremony has been fixed upon as the scene of theological warfare. It has been affirmed and denied, with equal confidence, that the imposition of hands was a symbolical translation of the sins of the offerer upon the head of the sacrifice; and, after wonderful exertions of ingenuity and courage by the combatants on both sides, the issue of the battle is still doubtful.

Dr. Magee, in his *Discourses, &c.*, (Vol. I. p. 376,) maintains, "that the burnt-sacrifice was offered in expiation of sins;" and to establish this, he brings forward, with a kind of triumph, an unguarded expression which Dr. Priestley had employed—who, though far from comprehending the real nature and import of the different kinds of sacrifices, approximated much nearer to the truth than his learned antagonist. If this account of the burnt-offering be admitted, the interpretation which I am illustrating must be abandoned; and the subject of sacrifices, which, according to that interpretation, is simple and elegant, must sink backward into all its former perplexity and deformity.

The only proof of his assertion which Dr. Magee adduces, is, that the offerer laid his hands upon the head of the victim; but how this symbolical action establishes his doctrine, he has not informed us, and therefore we may be allowed to question its truth. What he says upon this point, beginning at p. 366, Vol. I., is not only too long for quotation, but also too vague and indefinite for abridgment, and hence the reader who would fully enter into this subject, which is of the very first importance, ought undoubtedly to consult his work. I shall advert, however, to the principal arguments which he employs, and adduce the reasons which lead me to adopt a different opinion.

I would remark, then, that it is a maxim universally admitted, that every figure or symbol necessarily presupposes something that is literal and real, to which it refers. This meaning Dr. Magee acknowledges, and in the work alluded to, (Vol. I. p. 483,) he employs it with equal justice and ingenuity against his opponents.

“ It has been well remarked,” says he, “ that there is great inconsistency in the arguments of some writers upon this subject. They represent the death of Christ, not as a *proper*, but merely as a *figurative* sacrifice, and establish this by proving that it cannot be *either*. For whilst they argue that it is not a *proper* sacrifice, upon principles which tend to shew that *no such* sacrifice can exist, they prove at the same time, that it is not a sacrifice *figuratively*, since every figure presupposes reality.”

Now, since Dr. Magee and I, with the utmost cordiality, admit that every figure presupposes reality, I shall apply this maxim to his doctrine. In Vol. I. p. 366, he says, “ The ceremony of the imposition of hands upon the head of the victim has been usually considered, in the case of piacular sacrifices, as a symbolical translation of the sins of the offender upon the head of the sacrifice, and as a mode of deprecating the evil due to his transgressions.” And that this was really his own opinion is evident from the following declaration (Vol. I. p. 374): “ Upon the whole, then, there appears no reasonable objection against the idea, that the imposition of hands, in piacular sacrifices, denoted an emblematical transfer of guilt.” Now, let us take this for granted, and let us adhere to the maxim, that every figure presupposes reality; it inevitably follows, that there must be somewhere a real translation of sins, a literal transference of guilt, to which this symbolical translation of sins, this emblematic transfer of guilt, must refer. But it unluckily happens, that many writers of great learning and piety deny this, and, what is worse, that a certain writer, whose authority, I am

convinced, Dr. Magee, at least, will not call in question, actually denies it in the most explicit manner. His words are, "I have used the expression, *vicarious import*, rather than *vicarious*, to avoid furnishing any colour to the idle charge made against the doctrine of atonement, of supposing a real substitution in the room of the offender, and a literal translation of his guilt and punishment to the immolated victim; a thing utterly incomprehensible, as neither *guilt* nor *punishment* can be conceived but with reference to *consciousness*, which cannot be transferred."—Discourses, &c., by William Magee, D.D., Vol. I. p. 352.

Now, "as it has been well remarked, that there is great inconsistency in the arguments of some writers upon this subject," I would ask Dr. Magee, how is it possible to maintain consistency in his argument, if the doctrine in this quotation be admitted? If it be true that there neither is, nor can be, a literal translation of guilt and punishment; if to suppose it, be a thing utterly incomprehensible; then to speak of a symbolical translation of sins, or of emblematic transfer of guilt, must be absolute nonsense, as there is no reality to which that symbol or emblem can refer. If every figure presupposes reality, and if there be no reality, no literal transfer of guilt, there is not in Euclid an axiom more clear than that Dr. Magee's interpretation of the imposition of hands must be false: for, upon that principle, it is a thing utterly incomprehensible that there can exist even a symbolical transfer of guilt.

Indeed, I imagine there is something radically defective in the mode of reasoning which certain writers employ upon subjects of this kind. When, from any

symbol, they endeavour to prove the existence of a reality to correspond to it, of the existence of which there is not an universal prior belief, they entirely forget the office of an expositor, and endeavour to perform an impossibility. Their office is limited to a task entirely different—to prove the existence neither of symbols nor realities; but to take symbols and realities which confessedly exist, and to shew their exact agreement or parallelism. They, however, adopt a very different method—they fix upon some symbol; and, after giving it an import which their opponents deny, deduce from this disputed import the existence of a reality which otherwise would never have been heard of—of a reality, which properly speaking, is nothing but a “dream of a dream, and shadow of a shade.”—For instance, they take it for granted, “that the imposition of hands is a symbolical representation of the transference of guilt,” and from this they reason, that there must be a real transference of guilt—a thing, the existence of which is so far from being universally admitted, that even some who reason in this way maintain, that its existence is “a thing utterly incomprehensible.”

Now, this is employing a mode of interpreting the symbols of the Mosaic economy as contrary to what the nature of the subject requires, as if Newton, when interpreting the prophecies of Daniel, had first fixed, from his own imagination, the import of the various symbols of that book; and then, instead of applying them to nations, and persons, and events, the existence of which was stamped upon the page of unquestioned history; had conjured up as many nations, and per-



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sons, and events, as his hypothesis required; and maintained, that though they were acknowledged by no history, yet their existence could not be doubted, as the import of the symbols evidently proved it. I may surely add, that I have adopted a very different mode of interpretation—a mode free from every absurdity of this nature. That there actually exist such realities as my interpretation requires—such realities as sanctification, justification, and peace of conscience resulting from both, all parties, whether friends or enemies, cheerfully allow. This has long appeared to me the only legitimate mode of interpreting symbolical writing of every kind—a mode which led me, when a boy at school, to search for realities in human nature and in history, when hanging with rapture over the fairy pages of Spenser.

As these remarks, upon the supposition that there is no real transference of sin, appear to me to be perfectly sufficient to overturn, not only the reasoning of Dr. Magee, but all reasoning whatever on the same side, I might here conclude this long discussion. But as others, and perhaps Dr. Magee himself, may still maintain a real, in order to establish a figurative transference of sin, I beg leave, upon the general question, to make the following observations.

In the quotations lately adduced, Dr. Magee, by explanatory terms, modifies his assertions in such a manner as to contract considerably the distance which a careless reader may imagine there is between his sentiments and mine. Instead of asserting, that the imposition of hands indicated a translation of sins in every instance, he has restricted that indication to a particular

case—to the case of piacular sacrifices. Now, I am afraid, that this is attended with one bad consequence—it entirely changes the state of the question; and removes the inquiry from the simple import of the sign to a previous question, namely, what sacrifices were piacular. It is evident, that if this character be confined to sin-offerings, his expressions, though far from being accurate, and his assertion, though in one point evidently false, might be admitted much readier than if they extended it to burnt-offerings. For, as in the sin-offering, the victim represented the sin, and assumed the name of what it represented, it might be said—not certainly with strict propriety—but still it might be said, that there was a translation of the sin of the offender upon the head of the victim. But should this be admitted to be the meaning of the author—which it undoubtedly is not—still his interpretation of the import of the imposition of hands would have no support. The transference of sin would then be indicated, not by the imposition of hands, which it ought to be upon Dr. Magee's hypothesis, but by the nature and name of the sacrifice—by the circumstance, that it was appointed by God to represent sin, and that it received from him that appellation. Upon the other supposition—the supposition that the imposition of hands, of itself, indicated the transference of sin—it must have done this in every instance in which it was performed. But as the restricting of it to piacular sacrifices is inconsistent with this, it infallibly follows, that the imposition of hands had no such import.

But if such difficulties attend this author's interpretation, even when confined to sin-offerings, how must

they be increased, when in the class of piacular sacrifices, he includes the burnt-offering, and perhaps the peace-offering! Indeed his words, (Vol. I. p. 367,) "But in order to prove, that it was not attended with acknowledgment of sin, in sacrifices not piacular, it is necessary to shew, that in none but piacular, was there any reference whatever to sin," seem to imply that the imposition of hands indicated a transference of sin, in every instance, even in such as were not piacular—a distinction which, upon this supposition, appears to me to have no foundation in nature; as I suspect that the only quality which makes a sacrifice piacular, in any sense of that word, is, that it has a reference to sin.

I would further observe, that Dr. Magee leaves the premises from which he set out, and from which he ought always to have reasoned; and assumes an entirely new ground, in order to establish a conclusion which he had tacitly pledged himself to establish from his first premises. This is a fundamental error in all reasoning—an error which I am surprised the ingenuity of the author could admit, and which completely sets aside his conclusion. That I may not seem lightly to prefer such a charge against a writer of great respectability, I shall lay before the reader the grounds of it, and leave it to his decision.—The premises, from which Dr. Magee sets out, are, "That the ceremony of the imposition of hands upon the head of the victim indicated the symbolical translation of sins." Here, then, he had taken his stand; and here he ought to have maintained the combat: and I cannot but remark, that this he does till such time as he has familiarized the mind of the reader to this statement; and then, having

advanced from pp. 366 to 369, where he meets the scape-goat, which he thinks to be the strong hold of his hypothesis, he comes forward with the following declaration: "Now that the imposition of hands, joined to the confession of sins, was intended symbolically to transfer the sins of the offerer on the head of the victim—will appear from the bare recital of the ceremony."

Thus, then, the state of the question is entirely changed. At first, we had only to contend with the imposition of hands, but now a most powerful auxiliary—an auxiliary, in short, a thousand times more formidable than the principal, namely, the confession of sins, makes his appearance; and no wonder that we should be a little startled at the unexpected intruder! Nor let the reader imagine, that this is a matter of small importance. It is of the very first importance, in the present discussion; and is a proof, how much both the writer and the reader of controversy, should consider every step which they take. For this purpose we have only to remember, that the imposition of hands extended to all animal sacrifices, but the confession was confined to the sin-offering. What power, soever, therefore, the former ceremony possessed, to denote the transference of sin, must have extended to the whole range of its application; but the power of the latter could only extend to the particular sacrifice to which it was applied. But by joining both together, Dr. Magee gives a common cause to both; and instead of restricting the imposition of hands to the contracted limits of the confession of sins, he artfully extends the confession of sins to the wider limits of the imposition

of hands. The point to be proved is, that in burnt-offerings, and perhaps in all others, there was a transference of sin; and the proof of this is drawn, not from the imposition of hands only, which it ought to be, by every legitimate rule of reasoning, but likewise from the confession of sins—a ceremony, which, let it possess what power soever the ingenious professor pleases, was never employed in burnt-offering, and consequently, was a witness perfectly irrelevant upon such a point.

But this is not all: it is the latter ceremony, the confession of sins, that has really any reference to sin at all. It was therefore a masterly stroke of policy to bring forward a powerless phantom, in complete armour, who, from the extensive range of his perambulations, might appear to have a shadowy claim to the contested field, and might attract and dazzle the eyes of the enemy; and, under cover of his bulk, to conceal a real warrior, who, though he had no right to appear, was capable of doing great execution, that his deadly thrusts might be attributed to the other. This, however, like every attempt of the kind, when discovered, must overturn the cause which it was designed to support; and not only so, but support a cause directly opposite. The single circumstance, that the confession of sins was exclusively appropriated to the sin-offering, is a full demonstration that that sacrifice alone had a reference to sin.

Having thus contracted the field of controversy to its original limits, we may be said to have finished the controversy itself. But since the point is of such importance, that its decision must for ever set aside some of the most inveterate corruptions of Christianity, I apprehend it will be necessary, by an appeal to facts

recorded in scripture, to shew the weakness of Dr. Magee's hypothesis, though it should be done at the expense of prolixity. I observe then, that every instance of the imposition of hands, recorded in scripture, proves that it was never employed to indicate the transference of sin from the person who imposed them, to the person upon whom they were imposed.

The first instance of this ceremony that demands our attention, is Lev. xxiv. 14. This passage is entitled to this preference, not because it possesses any peculiar advantage over others of a similar nature to decide the controversy, but because it is the only one that Dr. Magee ventures to adduce in which this ceremony is used without any respect to sacrifices." His words are (Vol. I. p. 375): "In Lev. xxiv. 14, 15, we find this action prescribed in the case of the blasphemer, before he was put to death; it being at the same time added, that *whosoever curseth his God, shall bear his sin*: thus as it were expressing by this significant action, that the evil consequences of his sin should *fall upon his head*; and in these words, Maimonides expressly says, the blasphemer was marked out for punishment, by those who laid their hands upon his head, 'thy blood be upon thine own head,' (see Outram. de Sacr. lib. i. chap. xv. § viii.) 'as if to say, the punishment of this sin fall upon thyself, and not on us and the rest of the people.'"

It is a curious fact, that this is the only instance in the whole scripture which this ingenious author brings forward to settle the point in question, although it appears to be, of all others, the least calculated for that end. My reason for saying so is, that it is attended

with some circumstances which are just sufficient to make a person, who is not continually upon his guard against the arts of controversy, suppose, that it is perfectly analogous to the subject of dispute; and hence, to allow full scope to the ingenuity of the disputant, to draw from it what consequences soever he pleases, to support a favourite hypothesis, without much danger of detection. The circumstances to which I allude are, that the person, upon whom the ceremony was performed, was accused of a capital offence; that he was put to death for that offence; and that the Supreme Being declares, that whosoever curseth his God shall bear his iniquity.

But further: this instance is attended with other circumstances, which, to a mind awake to the real nature of things, must appear sufficient to render all the consequences that may be drawn from it perfectly nugatory. To evince this, I apprehend, it is only necessary to bring together the point to be proved, and the fact which is to prove it. The point to be proved is, that the imposition of hands was a symbol which indicated the transference of sin committed by the person who performed the imposition; to an innocent person upon whom that imposition of hands was performed. The fact, which is to prove that, is, that persons who were perfectly innocent of the sin in question laid their hands upon the head of the sinner, whom they had seen commit the sin for which he was justly to die. That this is a fair statement of the case, is evident; that it is destitute of every quality, necessary to give it the least semblance of power to support Dr. Magee's doctrine, is also evident; nay, that it possesses

every quality necessary to overturn it, a few words will completely shew. The persons who laid their hands upon the head of the blasphemer, were confessedly perfectly innocent of the sin: hence, what did not in any manner whatever belong to them, it was impossible that they could transfer. The person, upon whose head the imposition\* of hands was performed, was himself the sinner: hence, what belonged to him, and to him alone, could not be transferred to him from others. The imposition of hands, therefore, in this instance, was performed, when, instead of its affording an example of the transference of sin, it is "utterly incomprehensible" that a transference of sin could be designed, far less effected. The instance, therefore, which the learned Professor adduces to support his doctrine, is so far from doing so, that no other seems necessary to prove, that "there can be no reasonable objection against the idea that the imposition of hands never in one instance denoted an emblematical transfer of guilt."

But what then was the import of the ceremony in the case before us? To this, it is a sufficient answer, that my argument requires no solution of this inquiry. All that my argument requires is, that I shew that the import which Dr. Magee assigns to it, has no foundation. Truth, however, has seldom occasion to stand merely on the defensive. The following appears to me to be its real import.—As the persons, who performed the ceremony, were the witnesses who beheld the commission of the crime, and by whose evidence the criminal was condemned, the ceremony seems to have been designed to impress their minds with the



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awful responsibility under which they acted. As not merely the character and the property, but the life of the accused, was in their hands, it was necessary to employ every means which might have a tendency to make them adhere to truth and tremble at falsehood; and no ceremony appears better calculated for these purposes, than that the persons, by whose testimony one of their brethren was to be hurried to the tribunal of God, should, at that awful moment, be obliged to lay their hands upon his head as a solemn declaration that their testimony was truth. Indeed, I imagine, that if ever circumstances should give rise to suspicions, that the lives of the innocent were in danger from perjury, no auxiliary, to support the sanctity of an oath, could be adopted, perhaps, more powerful than the ceremony we are considering. • But were it adopted, it would be as absurd to suppose that the imposition of the witnesses' hands denoted a transference of their sins upon the head of the unhappy criminal, as it would be to suppose, that, at present, the lifting up of their hands, when the oath is administered, denotes that transference.

That this symbolic action, in ancient times, had no reference to sin, will further appear from the beautiful and affecting history of Jacob, when he blessed Joseph in the persons of his sons. We are told, (Gen. xlviii.,) that after Jacob came down to Egypt, he fell sick; that Joseph, with two of his children, went to pay the last duties to his venerable father; that the eyes of Jacob were dim with age; and that he said to Joseph, who came forward with his sons, Who are these? The subsequent narrative is so uncommonly tender and

pathetic, that I cannot refrain from transcribing some part of it. "And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place: And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face; and, lo! God hath shewed me also thy seed. And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head; and his left hand upon Manasseh's head. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads, and let my name be named upon them." Now, I would ask, is it possible to read this beautiful narrative, and maintain, that the imposition of hands was a symbol appointed by God to indicate the transference of sin?

Nor is this all: when it was told Moses, (Numb. xxvii. 12,) that the time of his death was come; with a magnanimity and a patriotism which must for ever dignify his character, he besought God, not to lengthen his days, but to set over the people a man qualified to govern them, that "they might not be like sheep which have no shepherd." Now, mark what follows: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and give him a charge

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in their sight : and thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. And Moses did as the Lord commanded him, and he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge." And what was the consequence of the imposition of Moses' hands?—The transference of Moses' sins, no doubt.—Let us hear.—"And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him ; and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded." This needs no commentary.

Not to mention any more instances of this ceremony under the Mosaic economy, I would ask, how was it, that under the Christian dispensation the ministers of religion were set apart to their office, by the apostles, and consecrated to the service of God? By the imposition of hands—and by the imposition of hands as emblematic of the very thing which I maintain it adumbrated in the burnt-offering—that the persons upon whom it was performed were devoted to the service of God. This is completely decisive in my favour; and the following passages will illustrate and confirm it. When the apostles (Acts vi.) set apart the seven deacons, as they are commonly called, to superintend the affairs of the poor, we are told that the people placed them before the apostles, "and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Now, let us compare this with St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy, (1 Ep. iv. 14,) "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery ; and with what he afterward says, (2 Tim. i. 6,) "I put thee in remembrance,

that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands," and we shall perceive the evidence of the doctrine which I oppose. In short, so far was the imposition of hands from having any reference to sin, that in all the instances adduced respecting ordination, it denoted, that the person who was consecrated to the service of God was holy, that he might be qualified to perform the work to which he was dedicated.

Another fact, sufficient of itself to decide the point at issue, is, that by the imposition of hands—the ceremony, which the theologists of the day imagine denoted the transference of sin—the apostles of our Lord transferred the Holy Spirit. Acts xix. 1, &c.: "And it came to pass," says an early historian, "that Paul came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" When they answered in the negative, Paul explained to them more perfectly the doctrine of the Spirit; and the historian adds, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." Is it possible to read this without exclaiming, how different is fact from theory; and the institution of God from the commandments of men!

The last instance, to which I shall call the reader's attention, is Matt. xix. 13, 15; Mark x. 16: "Then were brought unto him little children that he should put his hands on them, and pray. And he took them up in his arms, and put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Here the ceremony performed was the

imposition of hands: the person who imposed them was the son of God. Now, I would wish to know, as it may serve the interests of religion, what sin or guilt was symbolically transferred from the Son of God to these little children, when he laid his hands upon them and blessed them?

From the facts produced, it would not be difficult, with some appearance of reason, to maintain, that the imposition of hands denoted the transference of righteousness, were it possible to transfer any moral quality. —But to transfer sin! Is it possible that such an idea could ever have entered into the heart of any man, who was formed with wisdom more than the beasts of the field, and understanding more than the fowls of heaven? —Indeed, from the evidence now produced, it is not affirming too much to assert, that no opinion was ever brought forward, to impose upon the weakness and credulity of human intellect, which had less support from reason, from scripture, and from fact, than that the imposition of hands denoted a real or symbolical transference of sin.

It only remains that I apologize to the reader, for making such a demand upon his patience, to a subject which perhaps might have been left to his own judgment. I confess, I should not have discussed the point so fully, had it not been the first time that I was forced to oppose the opinions of a writer of great learning and respectability, who, by maintaining in words, opinions which he has virtually given up, has afforded no small support to doctrines, which, I believe, have defaced the beauty and obstructed the power of the religion of Jesus. I judged it necessary, therefore, for the cause

of truth, fully to investigate the first ground of difference which occurred between us, that the reader might remember the precept of Jesus—"Call no man master, for one is your master, even Christ."

We now naturally arrive at the confession of sins which the Mosaic ritual enjoined. That, in every sin-offering, the sinner was commanded, immediately before he put the victim to death, to confess over him the particular sin which he had committed, is a circumstance which strongly solicits our attention. Upon the doctrine which I maintain, this is equally expressive and just. The scripture asserts, and reason confirms the assertion, that "he who covereth his sin shall not prosper; but he who confesseth and forsaketh it, shall have mercy." At the moment, therefore, when the offender was to slay the victim which represented his sin, as an emblem of repentance, it was absolutely necessary, as a symbol of this important concomitant of repentance, that a plain and open confession should be made. Such a confession, when one spark of ingenuous shame remained in the heart, must have been one of the most powerful guardians of virtue; inasmuch as every person, who should yield to the voice of temptation, would have not only to violate every virtuous principle, but to overcome the reflection that, before he could expect forgiveness, he must publish his sin and depravity to the world. Such a confession, likewise, was strongly expressive of the deep sense which he cherished of the evil of sin; of his folly and wickedness in yielding to its power; and of his willingness to put it to death at the command of God. Nothing, I apprehend, but this single circumstance is necessary to

shew how the external ceremonies—"the works of the law"—led the performers of them to "the righteousness of the law." Indeed, every symbol enjoined, was so parallel to the moral duty adumbrated by it, that it served as a constant monitor to awaken the sensibility, to keep alive the attention, and to stimulate the obedience of an ignorant and stiff-necked people.

Though these remarks are sufficient to explain the import, and to display the suitableness of this ceremony, yet it will be necessary still more particularly to draw the reader's attention to the important fact, that it was invariably confined to the sin-offering. Upon the common hypothesis, that every sacrifice had a reference to sin, this circumstance is altogether inexplicable. We should then be under the necessity of acknowledging, that the principal, if not the sole, end for which the Supreme Being appointed the burnt-offering, and perhaps the peace-offering, was not indicated by any one circumstance attending them, or by one hint given us in scripture. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that this is the more unaccountable when we recollect that confession, an action so admirably adapted to denote that reference, was really employed, and employed for that very purpose, in another sacrifice of that economy. Had no confession of sin been made at all, the name and the ceremonies attending the sin-offering would have indicated, though not so expressly, that it had a reference to sin. If, therefore, a reference to sin had been designed in all, we may be certain that if confession had been omitted in any, it would have been omitted in the sin-offering—in that particular instance in which it was not essentially necessary. But that

this ceremony should have been employed only in the solitary instance, where all that it could do was only to confirm information which must have been obtained elsewhere, and, at the same time, should have been omitted in all those instances where it was absolutely necessary to give information of the highest importance—and information of the highest importance, too, which it was impossible to derive from any other source—is a supposition which will never be admitted for a moment by any candid and discerning mind.

Whilst the exclusive appropriation of confession to the sin-offering, presses with such overwhelming force against the common hypothesis, it will naturally be asked, Is it perfectly consistent with the interpretation which I give?—In many points of dispute, especially where great and good men differ, it generally happens that there are difficulties on both sides, probably owing to the circumstance that truth is but imperfectly seen by either; and the only thing which wisdom recommends in such cases, is, to adhere to the side which appears to be pressed with the fewest difficulties. In the case before us, however, we are relieved from the necessity of balancing difficulties; for on the side which I take, there are really no difficulties at all. My opinion necessarily supposes, that in burnt-offerings and in peace-offerings, no reference to sin could be made, inasmuch as such a reference would be a powerful objection to its truth. Indeed, the simplicity and consistency of my doctrine is no inconsiderable evidence of its truth. The sin-offering, in the view I give of it, exhausts, if I may be allowed the expression, every thing respecting sin—is a simple, a consistent, a com-



plete symbol of its death and eternal separation from the sinner, and hence is perfectly expressive of his sanctification. But having thus "ceased to do evil," being thus "dead to sin,"—what, naturally and necessarily follows? That we "learn to do well," that we "be alive unto righteousness." Hence it is proper, nay, necessary, that a victim should be presented, symbolical of the "presenting of ourselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God." For this important purpose, the burnt-offering, as we shall soon see, is so well adapted, that there is not one circumstance attending it which is not necessary to render it complete, and there is not one circumstance which is redundant. Had, therefore, any confession of sin been made at its immolation, that confession would have proved that the offerer was not fit for the service of God—was not fit for offering a burnt-offering—in short, that not a burnt-offering, but a sin-offering, was applicable to his state and circumstances. Hence it is evident that the burnt-offering had no reference to sin, but to righteousness—to justification, in the true and scriptural sense of that word.

I cannot but add, that though Dr. Magee strongly contends that the burnt-offering was piacular, yet nothing but his own acknowledged principles are necessary to prove that this is impossible. "Confession of sins," says he, (Vol. I. p. 368,) "Confession of sins being always undoubtedly connected with piacular sacrifices, as appears from Levit. v. 5, xvi. 21, and Numb. v. 7. The particular forms of confession used in the different kinds of piacular sacrifice, are also handed down to us by the Jewish writers." Now, as all the passages to which he here directs our attention refer to

sin, or to sin-offerings—as it is manifest from the whole volume of scripture that confession was ~~never~~ used in burnt-offerings or in peace-offerings—it inevitably follows from this writer's own principles, that neither the burnt-offering nor the peace-offering was piacular—the point which he labours ~~so~~ much to prove.

When the previous ceremonies, which have been already explained, were properly performed, the victim was to be slain. The import of this symbolic action, according to my interpretation, is easy and important, calculated in no common degree to accomplish the end for which it was designed. That this ceremony ought to be interpreted in consistency with the nature and intention of the symbol, and with the state and circumstances of the offerer, is a point which will not be disputed. Keeping this in view, I would observe, that in the sin-offering the offerer appeared as a sinner, and the victim represented his sin. Hence the killing of the victim denoted, that the sinner who expected forgiveness must not only confess his sin, and condemn it to death, but must actually inflict upon it that death to which it was condemned.—In the burnt-offering, the offerer appeared as holy, and the victim represented himself. Hence the killing of the victim denoted, that he who is holy must devote himself to God in the practice of righteousness, not only during his life, but also in death; and, since life itself is the gift of God, that he must be willing “to be offered up,” should the cause of virtue and religion demand that sacrifice.—And in the peace-offering, the offerer appeared as sanctified and justified, and the victim represented the peace which he enjoyed. Hence the killing of the

victim denoted, that he who enjoys peace of conscience, and rejoices in the hope of glory, must acknowledge that all his tranquillity is from the God of peace, must express his gratitude to the Father of mercies, and must devote his own prosperity and peace to promote the prosperity and peace of his brethren.

It appears to me that no objection can be made to this interpretation, in so far as it regards the sin-offering and the burnt-offering. Should it be thought, that to represent "that peace which," to use the language of Paul, "he who is justified has with God," by an animal that is slain, is not so natural as if it had been preserved alive, I would observe, that it was necessary to employ the victim in consistency with the great end and design which the entire symbol had in view, and that to accomplish that end, it appears absolutely necessary that the victim which represented "the peace which is the effect of righteousness," should be slain. For, as we shall afterwards see, in order to display the happy effects of serving God, the offerer, his friends, and his neighbours, were all to feast upon the victim—a circumstance which contained in it almost the whole moral of the symbol—this could never have taken place without its death.

That it belonged to the priest, as the representative of the community, to kill all the sacrifices of a public nature, is a fact which is well known. That every person was enjoined to kill his own victim, must likewise be admitted, upon the authority of Moses, who, in Levit. i. 5, says, "And he"—the offerer—"and he shall kill the bullock before the Lord, and the priests shall bring the blood." Here the construction of the

sentence is such, that the pronoun *he* can refer only to the offerer, who is enjoined to kill the victim, and who is clearly distinguished from the priests. But though this is conclusive respecting the general law, yet it is probable that it might be dispensed with in certain cases—in the case of women, for instance, and in that of persons who were unwell.

But leaving this, as a matter of small importance, I would observe, that the universally-received opinion, that no person who was unclean was ever allowed to kill his own sacrifice, appears to me evidently false. The proof which the abettors of this doctrine adduce is 2 Chron. xxx. 17: “For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified; therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the Lord.”

Now, I confess that this proves that unclean persons were not permitted to kill the passover; but I likewise confess, that it appears to contain no proof for extending the same doctrine to all kinds of sacrifice. That what is affirmed or denied of the whole, may be affirmed or denied of every part, I readily allow; but to reverse the maxim, and reason from individuals to the species, would be productive of the very worst consequences. From scripture, and from the nature of the thing itself, it appears evident, that no unclean person could offer a burnt-offering; for had he been unclean, it would have been necessary for him first to have offered a sin-offering. Hence no case ever could occur in which it was proper to offer a burnt-offering, and in which the offerer could be excluded by uncleanness

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from killing his own victim. But it is equally clear from scripture, and from the nature of the thing, that no person who was not unclean could offer a sin-offering; for had he been clean, he would have had no sin to be adumbrated by the victim, no sin to confess, and no sin from which he could be cleansed. Hence no case ever could occur in which it was proper to offer a sin-offering, and in which the offerer could have killed his own victim, upon the principle that uncleanness precluded him from that office. But that the person who offered a sin-offering ~~was~~ enjoined to kill his own victim, is manifest from Levit. iv. 29, where the person who is commanded to kill the victim is the same who laid his hand upon the head of it, and is evidently distinguished from the priest mentioned in the next verse. Hence nothing is more certain than that the maxim universally admitted, that no person who was unclean was permitted to kill his own sacrifice, is entirely without foundation.

The reason which has led theologists to maintain such a groundless doctrine, is, that they have given one common import to all the different kinds of sacrifice; and this has induced them to reason from circumstances which were peculiar to one kind, as if they belonged to all. Now, the nature and import of the sin-offering were such as rendered it highly proper for the offerer to kill his own victim, and yet it would have been impossible for him to have done this, had it been necessary that he should be clean. The truth is, it was the circumstance of his being unclean that rendered it proper for him to offer a sin-offering, and to kill the victim: and nothing but the greatest ignorance of the subject

could have led men to adopt a principle which is not only without any support from scripture, but is directly contrary to the truth of the thing. I add, that the passover, to which the passage in 2 Chron. xxx. 17, applies this rule, is the only sacrifice—allowing it to be a sacrifice—to which it can apply; for this obvious reason, that its nature and import were entirely different from those of every other. It was indispensably necessary that the whole house of Israel should keep the passover at one and the same appointed time. It was as necessary that he who did so, should be clean; and when he could not be clean, the only alternative which remained was, that the Levite—the person chosen by God to officiate in his stead—should kill the lamb for him—the very expedient which was adopted.

The reader has here another evidence of the consistency and truth of my interpretation. While the common hypothesis confounds all the different kinds of sacrifice, it likewise confounds every rule that can be applied to them. But, according to my interpretation, the ceremonies enjoined, and the rules applicable to each, were exactly what the nature of the case required—were indispensably necessary to the sign appointed to adumbrate the thing signified. It was proper, in the sin-offering, that the offerer should kill the victim, because he was polluted, as the symbol of his putting sin to death, that he might be cleansed. It was proper, in the burnt-offering, that the offerer should kill the victim, because he was clean, as the symbol of his devoting himself to the service of God, that he might be righteous. And it was proper, in the passover, for

the Levite to kill the victim for the person who was polluted, because the time of that festival was fixed, and because, as it had no reference to sin, no unclean person could kill it. That an interpretation originating in the fictions of the human imagination, should explain, with ease and consistency, every circumstance in such a complex and extensive ritual, and give to the whole a moral character worthy of God, and beneficial to man, must appear, from the confusion and imbecility which the common hypothesis introduces into it, to be impossible; and I cannot ~~but~~ hope, that every candid mind must be convinced, from the evidence produced, that the doctrine here maintained has its foundations in the nature and in the truth of these important institutions.

Since, in the language of scripture, the blood is the life of every animal, the ritual respecting the blood of the victims must deserve our closest attention. We are told, that in the sin-offerings which were offered up for the people, the priest was to take some of the blood, and was to sprinkle it upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offerings. It is impossible not to see the moral import of this symbolic action. It denoted, that before he could devote himself to the service of God by a life of righteousness, his heart, adumbrated by the altar, must be sprinkled with the blood of ~~his~~ sin—must bear the marks and tokens that its life is extinguished—and being thus purified from iniquity, it would “exalt the horns of its power”—exert its strength and energy in offering up “sacrifices of righteousness” to God. The remainder of the blood was then to be poured out at the bottom of the altar, where a conduit

was prepared for conveying it away, to denote that repentance—the pouring out of the very life-blood of sin—lies at the bottom of all goodness, is the very first act of obedience, upon which all the virtues which are afterward to dignify his character must be reared. But if the victim was the symbol of the sin of the priest, a ritual adapted to his particular office was enjoined. He was to carry some of it into the sanctuary, or first division of the tabernacle, to remind him, that, as he was frequently employed there in the performance of his peculiar duties, he ought to bear along with him evident marks that “sin was dead to him,” and that he ought to cultivate a superior sanctity, in proportion to his more intimate approach to God. He was likewise to sprinkle some of it upon the horns of the altar of incense, to denote, that, as “the prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight,” it was necessary for him to “destroy the body of sin in himself,” and to impress upon his prayers, if I may be allowed the expression, as a proof of his contrition, the bloody marks of its destruction. And he was to sprinkle some of it before the veil, towards the most holy place, to intimate, that, as he was admitted to a nearer access than the great body of the people to the second tabernacle, or the gospel dispensation, he should endeavour to anticipate that more perfect holiness which, in future ages, would adorn the saints; and that he should strive to prepare the way for his more exalted successor by constantly directing his own views to that place where the law of moral rectitude was deposited, and from whence it would be revealed by a nobler high-priest, to deliver



his votaries from the power and pollution of even "those sins from which they could not be delivered by the law of Moses."

The blood of the burnt-offering was all "to be poured out round about upon the altar" appropriated to that sacrifice, to denote, that, as the blood is the life of the victim, the offerer was to devote his whole life to the service of God—that his soul was to accompany the performance of every moral and religious duty—and that, to complete the sacrifice of his obedience, should the interests of religion and the glory of God render it necessary, he was ready to seal his testimony with his blood—or, to use the language of Paul, in allusion, no doubt, to this very thing—"that he was ready to be offered up when the time of his departure should come." The blood of the peace-offering was employed in the same manner, for almost similar reasons.

The manner in which the bodies of the different victims were employed, is not only curious and interesting in itself, but is calculated, I imagine, more than any thing which has yet fallen under our attention, to manifest the wisdom of Him who contrived the whole, and the truth of the interpretation which is here given. Had the different sacrifices been all designed to adumbrate one and the same thing, namely, the death which the sinner ought to suffer, and his deliverance from that death by Christ, we should expect that the ceremonies attending the disposal of the bodies of the victims would have been adapted to that adumbration. So far is this from being the case, that as every circumstance which we have already considered is not only altogether inconsistent with this intention, but is con-

sistent with an intention incompatible with it, so the manner in which the bodies of the victims were disposed, will afford evidence still more decisive in favour of the same conclusion.

Every rule of legitimate interpretation will lead us to conclude, that if all the victims represented the same thing, all their bodies would be employed in the same manner—and in a manner resembling that thing; but if they represented different things, their bodies would be employed differently. This rule of interpretation is not only just, abstractedly considered, but is just in its application to the subject before us, insomuch that a refusal to submit to it would, I apprehend, be a confession that the interpretation which would not admit of it, could not be an interpretation according to truth,

In the sin-offering, the skin, the flesh, the inwards—even the whole victim—except some few parts of it—which I will afterward consider—were to be carried without the camp, and then to be consumed with fire. The import of this expressive action can be hid from no one who has paid the least attention to the remarks already made. As the victim represented sin, this ceremony marked, in the strongest manner, how abominable it is, and how much it ought to be the object of the penitent's detestation—that if he expected forgiveness, it was necessary for him not only to confess it, and to devote it to death; not only to shed its blood—to extinguish its very life and spirit—but to remove its dead carcase from his dwelling, as an object of abhorrence, and to consume it with an utter destruction.

But, were the same ceremonies enjoined in the burnt-offering? By no means. Instead of carrying the body

without the camp, to mark the detestable nature of what it represented, it was burnt upon an altar appropriated to that purpose, and which, as I formerly said, was the symbol of the heart of the offerer. Now, in the present case, nothing could be so proper as the ceremonies which we are considering. The nature and qualities of the heart of the righteous, even under that dispensation, when he could not be expected to rise to the same degree of moral excellence as a man may do under the gospel, were admirably adumbrated by an altar of incorruptible wood, overlaid with brass. It is this incorruptibility of the heart which stamps a dignity and a value upon every moral and religious action which we perform, according to the words of our Saviour—no contemptible proof of this interpretation—that it is “the altar which sanctifieth the gift.”

But ought not the sin-offering to have been burnt also upon an altar? I think not—and the reason of my opinion is not derived altogether from the circumstance that it was not enjoined, but, what is more, from the nature of the thing. To have offered victims representing sin and righteousness, upon the same altar, would have been, in every point of view, preposterous, as the qualities of the heart suited to the one, would have been altogether unsuitable to the other. But I apprehend, that to have appropriated a particular altar to the sin-offering, would have been improper. When we speak of the heart accompanying any thing, we always mean, that that thing is the object of its affection and esteem. This, however, sin could not be in the case before us, however much it might have been at the moment of its commission, and hence no altar

could be allotted to it. But it was to be burnt in a clean place, to denote, that in the performance of duty it would never be necessary to go to places or companies where men could receive pollution, but, on the contrary, that it is in places of purity, and in the company of the good, that the greatest detestation of sin is felt, and that the remains of it are utterly annihilated.

But this is not all. If it would have been improper to have presented both on one altar, it would have been equally improper to have consumed both with one fire. Was, then, any distinction here made by the wisdom of God? Whilst the sin-offering was consumed without the camp, by common fire, the burnt-offering was consumed upon the altar, by hallowed fire, which descended from heaven for that express purpose, and which ever afterward was to be preserved alive upon the altar. Whilst this circumstance must, in a great measure, fix the nature of Abel's sacrifice, and determine the way in which God testified his acceptance of it, it brings to our recollection the sacrifice of Abraham, Gen. xv. 17,—the sacrifice of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, 2 Chron. vii. 1—3,—and the sacrifice of Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 38,—which were all burnt-offerings, and were all consumed in the same manner, by fire from heaven. In the case before us; the circumstance is related by Moses with the greatest minuteness, Levit. ix. 24: "And there came a fire out from before the Lord"—probably from the Shechinah between the cherubim in the most holy place—"and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat; which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces."

This distinction between the sin-offering and the burnt-offering is so wonderfully striking and just, that I imagine no other evidence is necessary to overturn the common hypothesis, which maintains that both had a respect to sin. To have employed upon sin, which is to be cast into the fire of hell, fire which came down from heaven, would not only have been improper, in any symbolic representation, but, in the case before us, it would have been really impious. To have employed unhallowed fire—the heat, the zeal, the love of this world—to kindle the altar of burnt-offerings—to inflame the heart that is to produce works of righteousness—would have been equally reprehensible. Unhallowed fire, then, was proper for the unhallowed thing. But for sacred things, sacred fire was absolutely necessary, and hence it was procured in a miraculous way. How important the instruction which was thus communicated to the Jews! How powerful must have been this symbol to lead them to abhor sin! How powerful to love virtue! Nor ought its influence to be despised at the present day. It was the symbol of cloven tongues of fire which adumbrated the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles of our Lord, to animate them with zeal and ardour in the service of their Master. Hence, in Isaiah iv. 4, he is called “the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning.” No emblem could have been employed more proper to mark the ardour and zeal with which the offerer should engage in the practice of every moral duty—to impress upon his mind the important truth—a truth which the votaries of superstition and bigotry have never felt nor acknowledged—that the zeal and ardour which ought

to animate the heart must not be inflamed by the unhallowed fire of earth or hell, but by that sacred fire which descends from above—that sacred fire which warms the heart, and inspires the soul with all the charities of human nature—with that sacred fire which will cherish, but not scorch, the trees of righteousness; which will soften, but not consume, the hardest heart.

Another circumstance, no less admirably fitted for accomplishing the end in view, was, that the victim for sin, for a very obvious reason, was consumed all at once; but the victim of the burnt-offering was cut into a certain number of pieces, which were consumed, not at once, but in regular succession. Thus the burnt-offering, which was slain and divided in the morning, continued burning upon the altar until the evening; and that which was slain and divided in the evening, continued burning upon the altar until the morning. From this circumstance, the morning and evening sacrifices, which were offered for the whole people, were emphatically called the continual burnt-offering.

Now, to adapt these circumstances to the common hypothesis, would, I am convinced, be a hopeless task. But is it possible to contemplate them, and not to perceive how proper they were for exhibiting the line of moral conduct which they were designed to adumbrate? When the Jew beheld the sin-offering consumed at once, with every mark of abhorrence, it informed him, that the utter extirpation of sin ought to be effected with the greatest expedition, and that every delay in repentance is not only dangerous, but is itself a sin.—Again, nothing could have impressed the minds of the Israelites more than the manner of con-

suming the burnt-offering. It taught them, that, like the living creatures mentioned in Rev. iv. 8, they should rest neither day nor night, but be continually engaged in the service of God—that their various actions, which compose the parts of the great sacrifice of righteousness which every man ought to offer to God, should, like the various parts of the victim, be set in order continually, should every moment of his life ascend in grateful memorial before the throne.

But before the inwards and legs of the burnt-offering could be consumed upon the altar, they were commanded to be washed in water. This evidently denoted that inward purity of heart and mind, and that external decency of speech and conduct, which ought to be exhibited by him who gives up himself wholly to God. This is strikingly illustrated by another emblematic representation—our Saviour's washing the feet of his disciples. Peter, from a mistaken humility, refused to comply with his Master's request, till he was informed that it was absolutely necessary. Running, then, to the opposite extreme, as if, whatever he should do, he were resolved to be righteous overmuch, he was not only for his feet to be washed, but likewise his hands and his head. No, says our Lord, "he that is washed"—he that is already sanctified—"needeth not, save to wash his feet"—needeth not to go over again the work of sanctification; needeth not "to lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works, but to go on unto perfection." Yet still, in his intercourse with the world, the most holy person will contract as much defilement as will render it proper for him to wash his feet. How strikingly descriptive, then, the

ceremony of washing the inwards and legs of the burnt-offering—descriptive of that purity, which the man who dedicates himself to God, ought to cultivate, even in the meanest and most secret of his actions!—The reason of the ceremony is obvious: the meanest action, which a good man is called to perform, may be performed in such a manner, as not only to divest it of all its meanness, if I may use the expression, but even to give it a beauty and dignity of which, at first sight, it did not appear susceptible.

But with respect to sin, however fashionable, however elegant, however dignified, it may appear in the eyes of men; however gilded and varnished it may be by the arts of its votaries; still, in the sight of God, it is hateful and abominable—it can never be purified by any washing, but must be consumed in all its filthiness!—Whilst, therefore, every ceremony respecting the burnt-offering, denoted the utmost regard to purity and righteousness; every thing respecting the sin-offering, marked the abominable nature of that which it adumbrated. This is perfectly inconsistent with the common hypothesis; and, at the same time, affords an indubitable proof of the doctrine I maintain. It may be thought needless to remind the reader so frequently of the difference of the two interpretations; but when the hold which long-established doctrines, however absurd, take of the mind; and the dangerous consequences which have been deduced from the common interpretation, are duly considered; I hope the necessity of the case, and the motive with which I am influenced, will apologize for my conduct.

Another difference, in the ritual, respecting sin-offer-



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ings and burnt-offerings, is equally curious and instructive. It is well known, that of the victim which the priest immolated for the sin of others, he and his brethren were to have a small portion; but of the victim which he offered for his own sin, he was to have no part—the whole was to be consumed with fire. Why was this distinction made?—To inform the Jews, that whilst the ministers of religion employed their labours to deliver them from the slavery of sin, it was but just that they should be supported. But with respect to the priests themselves the case was different—they were to put to death their own sins, without the least regard to profit or reward; from a rooted hatred to their disgraceful dominion and destructive tendency.

But in the burnt-offering nothing similar took place. Whether offered for others or for himself, no part of the victim was to be eaten by the priests or by the people—a circumstance which, upon my interpretation, might have been supposed, though the Scriptures had given us no information. As no man, according to our Lord's declaration, can serve two masters, it would have been improper to have appropriated any part of the victim, which adumbrated that service, to any purpose or person, but to God. This, then, clearly taught the Jews, that they were to please God and not men—that they were to obey God and not men—that they were to serve him with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, and with all their strength:—that even in those actions which tended to their own happiness, or to the happiness of others, they were to have a regard to the authority, the command, and the glory of God. Thus, and thus only,

could they “serve him in holiness and in righteousness all the days of their lives.”

Another fact, no less worthy of our attention, respecting the bodies of the victims, is, that whilst every thing which came in contact with the burnt-offering was, from that circumstance, holy, in conformity to that which it adumbrated; every thing which touched the sin-offering was in consequence thereof polluted. It is impossible not to feel the evidence which arises from this circumstance, against the common interpretation and in support of mine. The person who carried the scape-goat, as it is called, into the wilderness—the garment upon which any of the blood of sin-offering was sprinkled—the person who touched any of its flesh—the vessels in which any of it had been sodden, were either to be broken; or to be washed and scoured from the pollution which they had contracted. It is an instructive fact, that Dr. Magee perceived this respecting the sin-offering; and yet, was not led to the evident conclusion, that if the same did not take place in the burnt-offering, the burnt-offering could have no reference to sin. As the passage alluded to, in his Essay, contains an important criticism, taken from *Wall's Critical Notes*, I shall give it in his words.

“It must be confessed,” says he, (Vol. I. p. 373,) “that the author of the *Script. Account of Sacr.* has gone upon grounds entirely different from the above-named authors. He positively denies, that either the scape-goat, or the bullock, incurred any pollution whatever; and maintains, that the washing of the persons who carried them away, indicated no pollution of the victims, inasmuch as the same washing was pre-

scribed in cases of *holiness*, not of *pollution*. But, besides that this author is singular in his notion that the scape-goat was not polluted, he proceeds altogether upon a wrong acceptance of those passages, which relate to persons and things that came into contact with the sin-offering; it being commonly translated, in Lev. vi. 18, and elsewhere, *he that toucheth them* (the sin-offerings) *shall be HOLY*, whereas it should be rendered, as Wall properly observes, in quite a contrary sense, shall be SANCTIFIED or CLEANSED, shall be under an obligation, or necessity, of cleansing himself, as the LXX. understand it."

Whilst our attention has been occupied with the sin-offering and the burnt-offering, we have in some measure lost sight of the peace-offering. This, however, is of small importance, as the great end which I had in view was to prove, that in the burnt-offering there was no reference made to sin; and if this has been accomplished more effectually than otherwise it would have been, by keeping that sacrifice continually in sight, the plan which I have pursued, will readily be excused.

Though it is not my intention to advert minutely to every circumstance respecting the peace-offering, which, indeed, cannot be attended with any difficulty to those who keep in mind the remarks already made, yet the few observations which follow will shew the truth of my interpretation, and the wisdom of its ritual, no less than those already brought forward.

I have already said, that the word peace, in the sense in which it is employed upon this subject, includes all the blessings which a good man enjoys from the beneficence of his Creator. The peace-offering,

therefore, was appointed to adumbrate this peace; and hence, in its interpretation, it ought to be modified according to the nature of that particular blessing which the offerer had in view when he appeared at the altar of his God. Hence, when the victim was presented as expressive of his gratitude for a blessing received, it was called a thank-offering; when presented in consequence of a vow, it was denominated a votive-offering; and when presented for the obtaining of future blessings, it was a supplicatory-offering. One thing, however, they had all in common—they were expressive of the offerer's dependence upon God for all prosperity—of his gratitude to God for every mercy—and of his willingness and design of communicating the peace which he enjoyed to his brethren.

Besides a small part of the victim, which, as we shall afterward see, was constantly burnt upon the altar of burnt-offerings, certain parts of it, according as circumstances required, were assigned to the priest. The breast of the victim, denominated the wave-breast, from a word signifying *to extend*, to *stretch forward*, was waved towards the four quarters of the heavens, to teach the offerer, that he ought to extend, to stretch forth his breast—his heart and soul in adoration and gratitude to that Being who fills all space, and who is the God and the Father of the universe. The shoulder of the victim, called the heave-shoulder, from a word signifying *to rise up*, to *be exalted*, was only heaved, or raised upwards, towards heaven; to denote, I imagine, that as the shoulder bears and supports every burden, the offerer, as a proof of his gratitude for the peace which he enjoyed, ought to bear every calamity—ought

to rise up under every oppression—and to oppose his shoulder to every toil and danger, which he might encounter in order to preserve his peace with God. These were to be given to the priest, and were to be eaten by him at the door of the tabernacle, to denote, that he had a right to partake of the peace and happiness of the people; to promote which he had dedicated his time and talents, and contributed by his doctrine and example—and likewise, to denote, that the pleasures and enjoyments of the ministers of the Supreme Being, ought to be, in a peculiar manner, moderate and innocent; ought to consist of things which, at least, have a reference to the duties of their office—of things which will not carry them from the door of the sanctuary; but will leave them such a temper and spirit as will at all times qualify them for entering in.

But the most striking part of the symbol is, that all the remainder of the victim was given to the offerer, to be eaten by himself, his family, and his friends. This, then, was the feast of the righteous! a feast of peace and of love! This denoted, with the greatest propriety, the tranquillity, the happiness of those who have presented to God their sin-offering, and their burnt-offering; who have “ceased to do evil, and learned to do well”.—What a noble—what a sublime lesson, was here presented to the Jew! Not only did his gratitude, as we shall soon see, ascend from the altar of burnt-offerings, as a sacrifice of a sweet savour to God—not only did the ministers of religion, who felt for him the affection and solicitude of a Father, rejoice in his joy—not only was “the peace which passeth all understanding,” and which dwells only in “a conscience void of offence,” a

continual feast to him—but from the heart of the good man, as from a living fountain, flowed the streams of peace and happiness to all around him, and, in the emphatic language of scripture, “made glad the city of God.”

I cannot dismiss this subject without calling the reader's attention to the meat-offering. As the epithet meat is now chiefly appropriated to animal food, this name is, with great impropriety, given to those offerings which, for the most part, consisted of bread, flour, salt, oil, and incense; and hence, they ought rather to have been denominated bread, or flour-offerings. It is a curious fact, that these bread-offerings, which were, in a great measure, eucharistical, and were appointed every day, constantly attended both the burnt-offering and the peace-offering—insomuch that they may be considered rather as necessary parts of them, than as concomitants. As bread is the emblem of instruction, this symbol taught the Jews, that, to enable them to work righteousness and enjoy peace and prosperity in a proper manner, their souls must be nourished with the bread of life—with the pure doctrines and precepts of religion—must be kept from corruption by the salt of wisdom; must be animated to diligence and constancy by the oil of joy, and the anointing of the spirit; and must continually offer up the incense of prayer for counsel and might—the incense of thanksgiving for peace and prosperity. Hence, says St. Paul (Rom. v. 1, 2, 5): “Therefore, being justified”—made personally righteous—“by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace

whercin we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

But was a bread-offering, composed of these various ingredients, appended to the sin-offering? By no means.—And why? For the most obvious and important reasons. Why offer along with sin, the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth? Sin has its origin in ignorance and error, and upon ignorance and error it depends for support. Why offer along with sin, the salt of wisdom? Whatever wisdom may be exhibited in putting it to death, yet sin itself is the most consummate folly—it is corruption itself, nothing therefore could season it, or preserve it from putrefaction. Why offer along with sin, the oil of the spirit of joy? Sin is not the fruit of the Spirit, nor the parent of happiness! It is not a sacrifice of joy but of sorrow! Why offer along with sin, the incense of prayer? Confession, the only part of prayer which had any reference to it, was performed prior to the immolation of the victim; and no praise, nor gratitude, nor glory, could arise from it to God. In the performance of every moral duty—in the enjoyment of the bounties of Providence, and the riches of grace—knowledge and instruction, wisdom and prudence, joy and adoration, are not only highly reasonable, but absolutely necessary. But in sin, all is ignorance and error, all is darkness and perplexity. Nor can it escape the most careless observer, that the most solemn festival appropriated to sin-offerings, and described Lev. xxi., is expressly declared to be a day on which they were to

afflict their souls, in perfect consistency with the nature of repentance. No such language is ever employed respecting burnt-offerings or peace-offerings; another circumstance altogether inexplicable upon the common hypothesis, which maintains that these had likewise a reference to sin. In short, the sorrow attending the one, and the joy attending the other, are such distinguishing characteristics of the nature of each, as must for ever draw between them a clear line of separation; and infallibly prove, whatever may be the opinions of men, that they were symbols of things entirely different.

That I may not exhaust the patience of the reader, I must pass over several circumstances respecting the victims; which, though perhaps of less importance than those already mentioned, would, if explained, tend to mark the wisdom of the institution, and to confirm my interpretation. There is one fact, however, which, as it must deeply impress every mind, ought not to be overlooked, namely, that the sin-offering is never once said to be a sweet savour to God; whilst, of every thing offered upon the altar of burnt-offerings, this is constantly predicated. Upon the common hypothesis — the hypothesis that the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering, as well as the sin-offering, had a reference to sin, this circumstance must fall with overwhelming force. Sin, in every shape, must be abominable to God; but righteousness and peace must be grateful to the Almighty. Nor can I refrain from adding, that my interpretation, which refers the different parts of the burnt-offering to the different actions of a virtuous life, will come strongly recommended to



every mind capable of giving to the following declaration of Paul that attention which it deserves: "I have received," says he, to his generous friends at Philippi, "I have received of Epaphroditus, the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell; a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing unto God."

I have already, directed the reader's attention to almost all the important ceremonies in the Mosaic ritual, corresponding to the different objects which they were designed to adumbrate. One ceremony, however, common to all animal sacrifices, has not yet been mentioned; which, if we may judge from the pointed manner in which it is enjoined, and the importance which is always attached to it, well deserves particular investigation. The ceremony to which I allude is, that the fat, the two kidneys, and the caul above the liver, were, in every sacrifice, forbidden to be used by man, were emphatically called the *bread* of the sacrifices, or, more properly, the *bread of God*; and were constantly consumed upon the altar of burnt-offerings.

Now, upon my interpretation, this can occasion little difficulty in the burnt-offering and the peace-offering; both of which, in so far as they were consumed with fire, legitimately belonged to the altar of burnt-offerings. But in the sin-offering, in which every circumstance denoted the utmost abhorrence of sin, and consequently, of the victim, the appropriation of these parts of the victim to the Lord; the burning of them upon that altar, which was not only holy itself, but which made holy whatever was laid upon it; throw in our way a difficulty of no common magnitude.—

The reader, however, is not to imagine that this circumstance occasions no difficulty upon the common hypothesis. But why advert to difficulties in that hypothesis, in which every circumstance becomes perfectly inexplicable? and hence, in this only it is consistent, that every part of it is equally unintelligible. But an interpretation, which derives one part of its evidence from its simplicity and consistency, has a more difficult task to accomplish. To wrap in darkness things which are clear, is a work peculiarly suited to the abilities and habits of the generality of theologians; but to elucidate things that are wrapt in darkness, not only by the mists of the most remote antiquity, but by the ignorance and superstition of a dark age, requires abilities and habits of a very different order.

As those persons, who are proud, and luxurious, and indolent, and who, of course, are careless and insensible to spiritual objects, are, for a very obvious reason, said in scripture, to be fat, and to have their hearts enclosed in fatness, the only interpretation which has been given of this symbol is, that it imported that the offerer was to renounce, at the command of God, his pride, his luxury, and his indolence. But though this interpretation perfectly satisfied the easy faith of our ancestors, though even in an age of some inquiry, it might perhaps be acquiesced in upon the broad basis of prescription, yet it appears to be liable to insuperable difficulties. That these parts of the burnt-offering and of the peace-offering, which were appointed to adumbrate, either the work of righteousness, or the peace that results from it, should be appropriated to

purposes entirely different—to adumbrate pride and luxury, and indolence, is a supposition that can never be admitted. Nor is it less preposterous to suppose, that these parts of the sin-offering, even allowing that they did adumbrate these vices, should have been consumed with hallowed fire, upon the altar of burnt-offerings, from whence sacrifices of righteousness only were to ascend to God, and which only could be a sweet savour to him. Indeed, were we to admit, that the offerer was conscious of any one of these sins, how much more of the whole, we should be under the necessity of maintaining—in order to preserve that consistency, which, whether we can perceive it or not, must obtain in every thing which proceeds from God—that to adumbrate that one sin, the whole, and not a part, of a sin-offering ought to have been immolated—and immolated, not upon the altar of burnt-offerings, but without the camp. What objections soever, therefore, may be urged against my interpretation, from this ceremony, never can, I imagine, be obviated by this absurd subterfuge.

A more just and comprehensive view of the subject, will, I apprehend, not only remove the difficulty, but educe, from the ceremony which gives rise to it, no inconsiderable proof of the doctrine which I maintain. The parts of the victim, which we are now considering, as they include what is called, in scripture, the reins, have always been understood to be the seat of our desires and affections; of our intentions and designs. Hence the Almighty not only claims these parts to himself, but attributes to himself the sole prerogative of searching the heart, and trying the reins of the

children of men, for the important purpose of giving to every one according to his ways. If, then, we follow the strictest analogy—our only guide in a subject of this kind, where we have no positive information—we must necessarily conclude, that these parts of the victim, in the burnt-offering, at least, represented the affection and intention of the offerer at that particular period. Now, though every part of the burnt-offering was holy, to denote, that in all their actions, even in their intercourse with the world, they were to preserve their integrity; yet still the superior sanctity of these parts, expressed by their being in a peculiar manner appropriated to God, and denominated his bread, marked the superior purity and rectitude of the designs and affections which the offerer was to cherish and cultivate, when worshipping in the immediate presence of his God, and dedicating himself to his service by sacrifice.

Nor, when we consider the nature of the peace-offering, is it difficult to perceive the propriety of this ceremony, when applied to this sacrifice. Though the victim represented that peace which results from keeping the commandments of God, and from enjoying his beneficence—though the body of it, for the important reasons already assigned, was appointed to be eaten by the priest and the offerer, yet it partook of the nature of a burnt-offering, in so far as the design and conduct of the offerer, at that period, was an act of obedience to the command of God. To adumbrate, therefore, the temper and disposition, the desire and intention, which animated the reins of the offerer, when thus employed, those parts of the peace-offering were, with the greatest

propriety, separated from the rest, and were employed, as the nature of the case required, in the same manner as the burnt-offering.

The intelligent reader, I imagine, so simple and consistent is truth, must already have anticipated all that is necessary for explaining this ceremony, when applied to the sin-offering. As we find, that, in every sacrifice, these parts of the victim were emblematic of the desire, the intention, and the conduct, of the offerer, at that particular instant, when he offered it; it is evident, that in the sin-offering, they must have represented the very act of putting sin to death—"of crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts." Now, as from sin, which, abstractly considered, is an abomination to God, arises the duty of repentance, which is nothing else but the putting of sin to death; so from the victim, which represented sin, and which, consequently, was an abomination to God, were selected those parts to adumbrate this repentance. As this act of putting sin to death, likewise, was an act of obedience to God, the symbol that represented it, not only partook of the nature of the burnt-offering, but bore that name, and was consumed upon the altar. Nor must it be forgotten, that as the act of putting sin to death, is well-pleasing to God, this not only accounts for the expression applied to this burnt-offering, that it was a sweet savour to God, but shews its propriety and beauty.

Thus, then, does this ceremony, which, at first sight, seemed to break in upon the simplicity and consistency of these elegant and expressive symbols, tend, when adjusted by the strictest rules of analogy, to display that simplicity and consistency still more than if

it had not been appointed: inasmuch as these qualities are preserved, in circumstances which are necessarily complicated—in circumstances in which it might have been suspected that they would entirely fail.

Before I conclude this Section, I may observe, that in the same manner, the clothes which the priests were to wear, had all an emblematic meaning, and exhibited to the imagination and the heart, truths of the greatest importance. The precepts, too, which distinguished clean animals from unclean; which forbade woollen and linen to be employed in the same piece of cloth; or to sow different seeds in the same field, had all a moral and a religious import—were designed to impress the minds of the Jews with the danger of associating with the neighbouring nations, who were devoted to the most absurd idolatry, and to the most degrading and infectious wickedness. This total separation, in their particular circumstances, was absolutely necessary, lest they should be polluted with their abominations, and their hearts be estranged from their God; for to have “broken down at that period the middle wall of partition,” to have allowed free communication between the worshippers of the one God, and the votaries of the numerous idols of the nations around them, must have completely corrupted the former with polytheism; but could never have brought the latter to acknowledge the unity of the Supreme Being. To the infidel and the libertine, who are unable to transport themselves to times that are no more; and to hold conversation with their remote ancestors—who measure every thing that is past, by what is present; and estimate institutions, not, by their

adaptation to the state and circumstances of the people who lived under them, but to their own ; these precepts may appear puerile and absurd ; without leading them to suspect that, upon such subjects, their ridicule originates in the narrowness of their views, and their contempt in their own folly and ignorance. To the man who unites in his character the philosopher and the Christian, I am persuaded, they will appear in a very different light. He will approach to them, not with the inconsiderate, the rash step of petulance and impiety ; but with the sober and dignified step of reason and religion. He will contemplate them as venerable, as sacred monuments of the condescension and goodness, of the wisdom and rectitude, of that Universal Parent, who regards with the affection of a father, the meanest of his children—who thinks nothing beneath his attention that can promote the purity, the rectitude, and the happiness of his offspring!—This language may be accounted weakness by some, and enthusiasm by others. Be it so. I have learned not to appreciate things by man's judgment. Such weakness may strengthen the finest feelings of our nature ; and the glow of virtue may be kindled by such enthusiasm !



## SECTION V.

*Of the Import of some extraordinary Sacrifices.*

THOUGH the remarks already made appear sufficient to explain the nature and import of the Jewish sacrifices, and to lay a solid foundation for doctrines very different indeed from those generally deduced from them; yet I apprehend it will still be necessary to advert to some of those particular and extraordinary cases in which, for reasons highly proper and instructive, a deviation from the common ritual was enjoined. The scape-goat, the cleansing of the leper, the red heifer, and the passover, are the four cases to which I now allude, and to which it is necessary for the reader to go along with me, that he may examine, with the most scrupulous attention, the interpretation which I am to give.

The reason which induces me to make this demand upon the reader, must be obvious to every person who considers that it is from these sacrifices in particular, that those who embrace opinions very different from what I do, have drawn what they are pleased to call “unanswerable proofs” of their doctrines. As truth, whether for or against particular opinions, is the object of my inquiry, and of my deepest veneration, I design to encounter, in all its magnitude, the danger—if indeed there be any danger—of investigating these symbols: the rites enjoined in them shall be fully enumerated, and every particular receive elucidation. Nor can I refrain from expressing my regret that Dr. Magee, in



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the Discourses already alluded to, when adverting to the rites enjoined in these sacrifices, has made his observations so general, and his expressions so vague, as to hide the difficulties of his interpretation, not only from others, but even from himself. My regret is the deeper, as I am convinced that a man whose learning and abilities I can admire, though he differ from me on many points of primary importance, would have found, by applying his hypothesis to every particular rite, that it was not only imperfect, but radically wrong, and that a very different interpretation was absolutely necessary to correspond to every circumstance in the ritual.

The festival in which the scape-goat, as it is called, occupies a distinguished place, is fully described in Levit. xvi. It is commonly denominated "the great day of expiation," not from any regard to the name originally given to it by Moses, but from the opinion which, in a dark age, theologists entertained concerning it, and which our translators received from their Catholic ancestors. From the term כפר, which, in some measure, I endeavoured to explain when considering the cover of the ark, comes כפרים, the name given by God to this festival, and which literally signifies, *the day of coverings*. The reason why it received this appellation, must be sought for in the peculiar duties of the day; and when we consider that the children of Israel removed from them, at this festival, all the sins which they had committed during the preceding year, and consequently covered themselves with purity or holiness, the propriety and import of the name must appear evident.

Though God is to be sanctified by all those who draw near to him, at all times, yet there seems to be a peculiar purity and holiness, a deeper reverence and fear, a sublimer grandeur and majesty, thrown around the solemn services of this day than of any other, which proved it to be the greatest of their religious assemblies. It would be foreign to my design to describe minutely the "circumstance" and preparation enjoined to both priest and people upon this occasion, in order to fill their souls with awe, and to exalt and sublime the spirit of their devotion. Even the sin-offering and the burnt-offering, which the priest immolated for himself and for his family, according to the ritual already explained—as well as the bullock which he afterward slew—may be passed over in silence without any injury to the discussion, as they were only preparatory to the peculiar business of the day, and as the remarks which I am afterward to make will fully explain their import.

The first object which, upon this holy day, arrests our attention, is Aaron, venerable from the dignity of his character and the sanctity of his office. He was "to put on the holy linen coat, to have the linen breeches upon his flesh, to be girded with the linen girdle, and with the linen mitre was he to be attired." We are not left to conjecture respecting the important truth which these symbolic robes were designed to convey. Not only the passages in the book of Revelation, in which, as I proved when considering the imputation of Christ's righteousness, the purity and rectitude of moral conduct is represented by the whiteness of fine linen robes, will explain this; but the inspired historian himself informs us, that "these were

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holy garments," as they were emblematic of that purity with which it was absolutely necessary that the high-priest should be covered before he could engage in the duties of that day. The washing of his body in water, no less clearly denoted that holiness which it was his duty to cultivate, in conformity to the nature of the work in which he was to be employed—a work designed to remove the pollution of sin from the souls of the Israelites, and to cover them with a robe of sanctity. .

Arrayed in this manner, Aaron received from the whole congregation two kids of the goats. These were to be appropriated, by lot, to two different purposes—the one was to be slain before the Lord; the other to be dismissed alive in the wilderness. It is evident, however, not merely from the nature of the thing, but from the assertion in the fifth verse, that the two animals composed only one sin-offering. Hence one object only could be adumbrated by it; for to make one symbol represent various realities, as is often done, would introduce such a licentious mode of interpretation, as would confound all the symbols of scripture, and entirely defeat the important end which they were designed to accomplish. But as this single symbol consisted of two distinct parts, we are led, by every legitimate rule of interpretation, to conclude, that the single reality which it was designed to adumbrate, must have been considered in two distinct points of view, and that each particular part of the sign must have perfectly corresponded to that particular view of the reality to which it referred. As it is evident that every sin-offering was the emblem of sin, and that the death of the victim

represented the manner in which the offerer was to put sin to death when he engaged in the solemn duty of repentance, it will not be necessary to advert to any of those ceremonies which the sin-offering before us had in common with others. We will therefore attend chiefly to those ceremonies which were in this instance added to the common ritual, and particularly to those that pertained to the goat that was preserved alive.

As it is evident that the ritual respecting the bullock, which Aaron killed for his own sin and for the sin of his house, was the same with the ritual respecting the goat, which was killed for the sin of the whole congregation, the remarks which explain the one will explain the other. The words of the institution are the following: "Aaron shall kill the sin-offering—and he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil." And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony—the tables of the law—"that he die not. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel." Though it is not absolutely necessary to the elucidation of my present subject, I cannot refrain from observing, that the last verse of this quotation ought to be thus translated: "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to cover with holiness, until he come out, and have covered

himself, and his household, and all the congregation of Israel."

I formerly endeavoured to prove, that the most holy place within the veil was appointed by God to adumbrate the gospel dispensation, and likewise, that the dispensation of Moses was established among the Jews, because, at the period in which it was given, they were too ignorant and rude to receive and improve a more pure and spiritual economy. This, then, opens up the whole ceremonies of this sacred day. It was therefore absolutely necessary to remind the Jews from time to time, that the law was only "a schoolmaster" to prepare them, as a church, for a nobler dispensation—that it was given "because of transgressions," upon account of the blindness of their understandings and the hardness of their hearts—and that it was only "to continue till the time of reformation," till they were advanced to manhood, when the tutors and governors assigned them would be removed. It was equally necessary to remind them, that as they were only children in understanding and purity, they were not to imagine that they "were already perfect, but that, forgetting those things which were behind, and reaching forth to those which were before, they were to press toward the mark, and strive to arrive at the measure and stature of perfect men;" that as soon as they should attain to this state of maturity, "that which was imperfect would be done away, and that which is perfect would come;" the veil would be rent asunder; the kingdom of heaven would commence on earth, and a nobler era begin to revolve. That, therefore, it was their duty and interest to keep these "good things to come" continually in

view, to associate them with every sentiment that can warm the heart, and every principle that can animate the conduct; and that thus, and only thus, they could give elevation and stability to their hopes, warmth and energy to their affections, and fortitude and perseverance to their steps, till they should reach perfection in the path of holiness, and be prepared for the sublimer dispensation that was to succeed.

Keeping in mind these observations, the truth of which, I think, will not be denied, it must appear evident, that nothing could have been appointed with greater wisdom than the expressive symbols which we are now contemplating. The sin-offerings, which the priest commonly offered for himself and for others, were of a private nature, regarded individuals only, and had a reference to personal holiness. Hence the time for offering these was not fixed by God, but, as the nature of the case absolutely required, was left to the determination of every man's conscience, which alone could inform him when he had committed sin, and consequently when a sin-offering was necessary. But the proper time for this sin-offering was not left to the decision of any man, not even of the whole community, but was appointed to be performed once every year—and appointed by God, who alone knew and could judge when they were sufficiently qualified for a better dispensation. This sin-offering, therefore, had a respect, not to individuals, but to the whole congregation as a church; had a respect, not to personal holiness, but to national reformation. This was connected, not only with the holy place, but with the most holy, and looked beyond the age of any man, to the maturity of the

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world—to a future dispensation. When Aaron, for his own sin, and the sin of his household—that is, for the whole priesthood—slew a bullock, the nature of the victim denoted the aggravated nature of sin when admitted by those who minister in the sanctuary, and that it was necessary to cover themselves with a superior sanctity to what they then possessed, before they could be qualified for officiating in a more perfect tabernacle, under a more spiritual dispensation. When he slew the goat for the sin of the whole congregation, it adumbrated the same thing with respect to the community, as far as their circumstances were analogous; and though the inferior animal might signify, that sin, in the people, is not so aggravated as in the priest, yet still its death informed them, that much of the body of sin remained within them to be destroyed, before the shadows should flee away, and the dawn arise to illumine the world. When the high-priest entered through the veil into the most holy place, all the priests and levites were excluded from the sanctuary. Why? To inform them that they were not yet prepared even for a glimpse of the glory which was to be revealed—that they were still to “walk by faith and not by sight”—by faith, which was to them, as it is to us, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”—The entering of the high-priest within the veil, the sprinkling of the blood upon and before the *rectitudary* eastward, and the number of times that this was performed, were all symbolical—were descriptive of the place where the sun of righteousness was to arise, of the means which he was to employ in leading his votaries to repentance, and of the complete and

perfect purification which he would accomplish. Every circumstance not only denoted that their own dispensation, and the services of their sanctuary, were imperfect, and therefore “could not make those who performed them perfect,” but likewise, that with the most ardent expectation they ought to look forward to a more exalted high-priest, and a sublimer dispensation; informed them, that they ought to grow in sanctity, from a regard to that great prophet whom God had promised to raise up, to be a still more glorious teacher of righteousness—and from a regard to that law which God by him would reveal to them, and impress upon their hearts in all its beauty and spirituality,—and informed them, that whenever “the way into the holiest of all was made manifest,” they were to carry along with them the life-blood of every iniquity, the most indubitable proofs that they had put sin to death, that they were sanctified and prepared for a new dispensation, and that they would improve its ministrations, in order to advance to greater and greater perfection.

The symbol of incense, as it has already been explained, must appear wonderfully proper upon this occasion. As our Saviour taught his disciples to pray “that his kingdom might come, till his will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven”—alluding, perhaps, to the time of the Millenium—so the incense, when burnt in the manner prescribed, taught the Jews to pray that “the desire of all nations” might come; that they might be prepared to hail his arrival; to become the subjects of his kingdom, and the partners of his glory: and likewise, that God, from the mercy that essentially belongs to him, would pardon their present



imperfection, would conform them still more and more to his own exalted character,—and, in particular, that he would be merciful to their high-priest, “that he die not;” who, in obedience to his appointment, had ventured within the veil, in order to animate their hopes and to inflame their desires of “better things to come”—in order to “transform them into the image of God from glory to glory.”

Though it is not absolutely necessary to the present inquiry, yet so forcibly am I struck with the wisdom of the whole contrivance, that I cannot resist the inclination which I feel to direct the reader’s attention to the great high-priest of our profession in similar circumstances. I formerly said, that what the Christian dispensation was to the Jews as a church, heaven is to the Christians. The important advantages, therefore, which, under the law, Aaron conferred upon his brethren by entering through the veil into the most holy place, were conferred upon his brethren by Jesus, when, under the gospel, he entered into heaven. Allow me, then, to apply to Christians the language which I just now applied to the Jews, and we shall see the glorious purposes for which “Christ died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven.” If we improve the contemplation of these circumstances, it will then be the grand business of life “to be conformed to our Lord’s death,” by being “dead to sin”—to “feel the power of his resurrection,” by being “alive unto righteousness”—and “to be conformed to our head,” by “rejoicing in the hope of glory.” We shall remember with triumph, that to cover his church with a robe of personal holiness, without which none can see the Lord—that “to

become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him"—and that to inspire them with the glorious hopes of immortality, "Christ Jesus, their forerunner, entered through the veil of his flesh into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for them."—"Having, therefore, dearly beloved, this hope, let us purify ourselves even as he is pure;"—"for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

We will now attend to the goat which was preserved alive. I formerly said, that as both animals composed only one sin-offering, both animals must have adumbrated sin, and adumbrated sin at one and the same time—at the moment of repentance. But as the ceremonies respecting the goat which was preserved alive, were very different from those that attended the other, the goat which was preserved alive must have adumbrated sin in a different point of view; must have inculcated truths concerning it suited to the nature and import of these ceremonies. The ritual respecting the live goat is thus given: "And when he hath made an end," of the ceremonies attending the goat that was slain, "Aaron shall bring the live goat; and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins, putting them, (*Heb., and shall put them*) upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

When we contemplate the solemn and impressive scene here exhibited to view, we shall not only, I ap-

prehend, perceive the meaning and import of these symbolical actions, but shall likewise feel the spirit which they were calculated to cherish, and display the conduct to which they led. Though I am inclined to think that confession of sins, according to the common ritual, was performed even over the goat, that was preserved alive, yet as it is not any where expressly mentioned, we have no right to draw from it any conclusions. But as the goat that was preserved alive was an important addition to the symbol, it was necessary that confession should be made over him, that thus the sins of the whole house of Israel might be put upon his head. This expressive action, therefore, was declarative of the settled determination of their heart, in obedience to the command of God; to use sin, the thing signified, in the same manner in which they used the sign. Now, as their putting to death the former goat, denoted their resolution to put sin to death, so their sending away of this into the wilderness, no less strongly denoted their resolution “never more to return to folly;” but that their separation from sin was to be final and eternal. Nor can it be forgotten, that as the whole symbol had a reference to the gospel dispensation, and to the preparation which they ought continually to make for its approach, it taught them, that in vain they confessed their sins and imperfections, in vain they even put their sins to death, if again they reverted to their former wickedness:—for as children who, from year to year, advance to manhood, should from year to year “put away childish things;” so were they, as a church, still to “advance from strength to strength,” that when “the way into the holiest of all

should be made manifest," they might be qualified to walk therein. Hence this part of the symbol was not only consistent with the other, but necessary to give it full effect. It taught the Jews the important lesson, which was afterward, for a similar reason, taught the Christians, (2 Pet. ii. 20—22,) "That if, after they had escaped the pollutions of the world, they should again be entangled therein, and be overcome, the latter end would be worse with them than the beginning: for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after having known it, to turn from the holy commandment; for it would then happen to them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Though this interpretation, I hope, will come recommended to every mind, not only from its plainness and simplicity, not only from its wonderful consistency with the grand import and design of the whole symbol; but likewise, from the moral influence which it must have had upon the Jews in preparing them for the gospel dispensation—the great end which it undoubtedly had in view;—yet, I apprehend, it will receive additional evidence from the name given to the goat that was sent away, as well as from that of the place where it was abandoned.

I must premise, that nothing is more easy for a translator, than to substitute for a word in the original, a word in his own language, which, though it may have some resemblance to it in meaning, adds to, or blends with it, an idea which is his own, and then from that idea which is his own, and which he has

added to, or blended with, the original idea, to deduce consequences perfectly foreign from those which the original author had in view. This is exactly the case with the subject before us. The goat which was preserved alive is denominated by God *זֶבַח*, the plain and literal meaning of which compound word is, *the goat dismissed*, or *sent away*, and consequently it implied, that by the voluntary act of those who dismissed it, it was for ever separated from its former habitation. Now, *the goat dismissed*, and *the scape-goat*, are interpretations which have just as much resemblance as is necessary for deceiving a careless reader into the belief that the ideas which they present are the same; and yet they are so different, as to give to ingenuity full scope to draw conclusions from the one which could not be drawn from the other. The name which our translators have adopted, has an evident relation to the casting of the lots, and to the escape which the animal thus made from death. The name which I adopt from the original, sanctioned, too, by all the ancient versions, has not the least allusion to these circumstances, but to his being taken from the abodes of men unto a wilderness, and his being there dismissed, in order that he might be for ever separated from his former haunts and companions. Nothing is more easy than, from the former name, to compare the escape of the goat, by a fortunate accident altogether independent of him, from the priest and from death, to our escape from divine justice and from damnation, by an event altogether independent of us, without ever adverting to any separation between us and sin; whilst nothing is more natural than, from the latter name, to compare the

removal of the goat, and his final separation from man and his habitations, to the removal of sin from us by our own act, and its final separation from us and our habitations, without ever adverting to any escape which we make from divine justice and from damnation. So much depends upon catching the exact idea of the original, as well as the spirit of the author which you translate, that, in matters of faith, the most serious consequences may result from very slight deviations from both. I must add, that at present I am not questioning the truth of any doctrine which may seem to derive support from the common appellation. Every doctrine, of any importance in revealed religion, must surely have a firmer foundation than the false translation of any name; and the nature of the evidence produced in favour of the doctrine alluded to, shall be fully considered in another Essay. At present, it is not my business either to support or to overturn doctrines of that kind, but to explain symbols, and to establish premises, from which doctrines may be afterward deduced.

Nor must the epithet which the Almighty gives to the wilderness be omitted, as it tends to confirm my interpretation. The word *גֹּרָה*, which is found in the original, is by our translators rendered in the text, *not inhabited*, and in the margin, *of separation*. The former labours under the defect which I formerly mentioned when considering the name given to the goat,—it presents an idea very different from that of the original. Indeed, to call a wilderness *a land not inhabited*, is, to say the least of it, perfectly superfluous, and is applied without any discrimination, as the term wilderness implies in it that it is not inhabited. The

interpretation on the margin, I confess, comes much nearer to the original; still, however, it does not exactly correspond to it. But as the etymon גור, signifies *to divide, to cut off, to cut in two*; גורה, its conjugate, when applied, to the wilderness where the goat was dismissed, implies that, by some natural barrier, it was *divided, or cut off*, from his former pastures, in such a manner as to render it impossible for him ever to return. It will not be necessary, surely, for me to enlarge upon the propriety of the name given to the goat, and the expressive significance of the epithet applied to the wilderness where he was abandoned. Should we explain the whole service as referring to individuals, we must perceive that nothing could be better adapted to express “the putting away of the filth of the flesh and of the mind,”—the entire and eternal separation from all sin, which every person should earnestly desire, and to accomplish which, it ought to be the great business of life. But when we apply it, as it ought certainly to be applied, to the whole people as a church, and as preparatory to our Saviour, and the establishment of his economy, this festival rises upon us in dignity and importance, and the dismissal of the goat, in the manner appointed, marks the wisdom of Him who appointed it—marks its adaptation for preparing the Jews, by a continual advancement in purity, for a nobler high-priest, and a sublimer dispensation, in such a manner as I cannot sufficiently admire.

Were we to transfer these remarks from the Jews, and from their preparation for the gospel, to us Christians, and to our preparation for heaven, the parallelism would appear wonderfully exact. As the law of

Moses “was a schoolmaster” to prepare the Jews for Christ and the gospel; so the gospel of Christ is a schoolmaster to prepare Christians for God and for heaven: and as both were appointed by the One God and Father of all, both were equally proper for the ages when they were respectively given. When, therefore, in the ceremony before us, we see how the sins of the people of Israel were laid upon this goat, that he might bear them away from them, into a wilderness, cut off by rocks or precipices, from all communication with men; can we feel the least difficulty in comprehending the manner in which, according to Isaiah liii. 6, “our iniquities were laid upon Christ that he might bear them away” from us, never more to return? If the former taught the Jews, that, if they hoped to arrive at a meetness for Christ and the gospel, it was absolutely necessary to part with every sin; the latter teaches us Christians, no less forcibly, that, if we hope to arrive at a meetness for God and for heaven, it is absolutely necessary for us “to lay aside every weight, and the sin that does most easily beset us.” For, as the apostle says, in reference no doubt to the language of the Old Testament, and to the ceremonies which I have now explained, (1 John i. 9,) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, *ὡς ἀφ᾽ ἡμῶν τὰς ἀμαρτίας, to send away our sins from us, and καθαρίσθῃ, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” But when our sins are thus dismissed, are thus borne away, the separation must be eternal. And why?—Because “if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins”—no further and more powerful means to induce us “to



put sin to death," and to separate it for ever from us ;— no further and more powerful means "to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us to be a peculiar people to himself." What, then, remains for those who return to the sins which they had abandoned? "Nothing but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, and of fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."—Such is the wonderful analogy which runs through the first and second covenants. Such is the light, which the proper knowledge of the one dispensation throws upon the language and doctrines of the other!

When we attend to the meaning, and import which have been given of these interesting symbols by others, for here the orthodox are far from agreeing in their interpretations, we at once find ourselves, not only in the regions of uncertainty and doubt, but of absurdity and impiety. As a proof of this, it will only be necessary to bring forward the interpretation which is supported by Spencer, Turretin, Cocceius, Alting, Meyer, and others,—names that stand high in the list of biblical interpreters. They suppose that both goats were types of Christ—the one, as he was exposed to the wrath of God ; the other, as he was exposed to the wrath of the devil. It is easy to foresee the issue of this contest with the enemies of man ; for, strictly speaking, both the antagonists of Christ, according to this hypothesis, must be considered under that character. The goat that was slain, is the emblem of Christ suffering death under the vindictive anger of God ; the goat that was dismissed, is the emblem of Christ overcoming the devil, and escaping from his power. This interpre-

tation seems to have its origin in an opinion which has oftentimes been maintained, that Christ, in our stead, made two atonements,—one to God, to satisfy the rigid demands of his justice, and another to the devil, for the loss which he sustained when the elect are wrenched from his power. It is not the design of this Essay to oppose formally such doctrines, by whatever names they may be supported, when there appears no great danger of their gaining many abettors.

The hypothesis, which Dr. Magee has adopted, is explained in the following words (Vol. II. p. 345) [4th ed. pp. 299, 300]: “Indeed, that the *two goats* made but one sin-offering on this occasion, the best commentators freely admit. The reason of this seems obvious. The death of the animal was requisite to represent the *means* by which the expiation was effected: and the bearing away the sins of the people on the head of the animal was requisite to exhibit the *effect*; namely, the removal of guilt. But, for these distinct objects, two animals were necessary to complete the sin-offering.”

“It must be allowed,” he goes on to state, “that an account somewhat different has been given of this matter by some very judicious commentators. The goat sent into the wilderness, and that which was offered up in expiation, jointly, they say, typifying the great Redeemer of mankind: the former animal exhibiting that, which could not be displayed by the latter, as having been slain; namely, that Christ was not only to be delivered for our offences, but to be raised again for our justification; and that, although he was to be crucified through weakness, yet he was to live by the power of God. Thus Ainsworth, Bochart, Alting, and

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before them, Augustine and Proppius, understand it." He adds, "The opinion of these writers, respecting the truth to be illustrated by the dismissal of the second goat, may perhaps not improperly be combined with that, which has here been proposed: so that whilst the goat which was slain, exemplifies the sacrifice offered for the sins of mankind; that which was sent away alive, may represent, not only the removal of those sins in consequence of that sacrifice, but also the restoration to life of him by whom they were so removed. Whether, however, this point be admitted or not, the circumstance of the two goats jointly constituting one offering, by exhibiting its different adjuncts, cannot, I think, with any reason, be controverted."

When we consider these extracts from Dr. Magee's Discourses, &c., we may easily perceive, that he was by no means certain of the truth of his interpretation. After proposing it, he not only explains a different interpretation, which ~~fr~~ some very judicious commentators" had adopted, but declares, that perhaps there would be no impropriety in combining the two together. But if a writer of such acuteness and decision as Dr. Magee evidently is, was so doubtful, upon a point of such importance, we may rest assured that there must be something wrong in the hypothesis itself.

As his hypothesis is expressed very briefly, and almost without any attempt to apply it to the particular ceremonies mentioned in the ritual, it is more difficult to comprehend it perfectly, and likewise, from its vague generality, to shew its absurdity. When I lay together the different places in which he endeavours

to explain his doctrine, the whole subject, I confess, is to me so doubtful and obscure, so removed from the common modes of thinking and of speaking, so foreign to every thing that takes place in human life; and, consequently, that “comes home to our breasts [business] and bosoms,” that I am not certain what to make of it. It has nothing distinct and definite; nothing tangible, that you can take hold of; every thing seems to wrap itself in darkness; to elude the keenest grasp of the understanding and vanish into non-existence when you approach it. I confess, after being moderately conversant with metaphysics, after paying to the explanations of the learned Professor all the attention in my power, I have repeatedly laid down his volumes in despair—not in despair of being able to refute his hypothesis, but in despair of knowing what it really was that I had to refute.

These remarks, I apprehend, are but too applicable to the manner in which this author considers this sin-offering. Instead of adverting to the name sin, which is given to it, clearly denoting, I imagine, that it represented that of which it bore the name; instead of adverting to the name of the goat dismissed, and the epithet given to the wilderness where he was abandoned,—all utterly incompatible with Christ’s ascension into heaven, which is surely any thing but a wilderness instead of adverting to all the ceremonies common to every sin-offering, as well as to those which are peculiar to this respecting the most holy place;—he adverts only to the single circumstance of putting their iniquities upon the head of the goat by confession, before he was dismissed. But this is so far from doing

to a subject of such importance that justice which it demands, that in reality, it is doing it the greatest injustice. The most absurd theories, that formerly were invented to explain the phenomena of the natural world, seemed in some instances to answer that end; and upon these their authors continually dwelt; whilst in many particulars they entirely failed, or were forced to demand suppositions, without any proof, in order to bring about an apparent correspondence. But that apparent correspondence was the very thing which deceived themselves and others, and made the world, for many ages, believe that the laws by which the solar system is regulated, were fully known; and what is more, made the world oppose the truth when clearly discovered. This is perfectly applicable, not only to the interpretations given by Dr. Magee of this interesting subject, but to all those which are commonly given. In some general and vague circumstances, there is an apparent correspondence, which all error must have with truth, before it can impose upon any mind; but as a whole, the correspondence entirely fails; nay, even in those particulars, in which the theory seems to correspond with fact, the assumptions are so many, that upon a strict inquiry, nothing solid would remain upon which the understanding could rest.

I could not, at present, advert more particularly to these, or to similar interpretations, without striking directly at the root of the hypothesis itself. The few remarks which I have made, however, will be sufficient to shew, that there must be some defect in the system itself, that can lead its abettors into such ob-

curity and even contradiction. When I come to consider, whether the Jewish economy was a type of the Christian dispensation, the foundation upon which all these interpretations entirely depends, will be thoroughly canvassed.

I shall now offer a few observations upon the ritual respecting the cleansing of the leper, as it is fully detailed in the fourteenth chapter of Leviticus. This subject must strongly excite our attention, not only because it is really curious in itself; but especially, because, in some circumstances, it is so similar to the sacrifice just now explained. The circumstances, to which I allude, are, that here two birds are presented to view, almost in the same manner as the two goats were, of which one was slain, and the other was dismissed alive in the open field. But though these two symbolical representations have a striking resemblance in some things, yet they have such a difference in others, as renders it impossible, in my opinion, to give, with any propriety, one common import to both.

Nothing, however, would be more easy, than to apply to the ceremonies that attended the cleansing of the leper, the language and the interpretation which Dr. Magee applies to the two goats. "The death of one bird," he would say, "was requisite to represent" the death of Christ, "the means by which the expiation was effected." The sending away of the other into the open air, "was requisite to exhibit the effect, namely, the removal of guilt. But for these different objects, two animals were necessary to complete the sin-offering." So easy is it, in this vague and general manner, to interpret scripture!

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Nor would it be attended with the least difficulty to combine with this the other interpretation, which, we are told, some very judicious commentators have given of the same symbol. To accomplish this, the reader has only to substitute the birds in place of the goats, in the quotation formerly given from this author. I shall, therefore, leave it to his own ingenuity, and shall bring forward two other interpretations of the same subject, to which I did not formerly advert, as I reserved them for this place. The following is the interpretation of the scape-goat, which Parkhurst gives in his Hebrew Lexicon, and which may be thus applied to the symbol before us, in his own words: "The living bird that was let loose into the open field," especially as he was first dipped in the blood of the bird that was slain, "is a plain type of Christ raised from the dead, by the strength of the Divine light, the glory of the Father, for our justification, and so carrying our sins into the open field, never more to be remembered against us." The only circumstance here added, is the dipping of the bird dismissed in the blood of the other that was slain—a circumstance which, had it taken place in the other symbol, would, no doubt, have been much insisted on by the author of this interpretation.

To shew still more the accommodating nature of the common mode of interpreting the symbols of the Mosaic economy, I shall produce one other explanation, which I have met with of the two goats, and which I shall apply to the cleansing of the leper.—"Nothing is more evident than the import of these symbols. The bird that was slain, was typical of those sinners whom God, in his inscrutable decree of repro-

bation, left without mercy to perish eternally by the hand of divine justice; and the bird, that was dismissed into the open field, was typical of those highly-favoured souls whom God, in his sovereign decree of election, without any regard to their faith or good works, either done or foreseen, predestined to everlasting life; and who have thus clearly exhibited to them their undeserved escape from the hand of divine justice."

I may add, that though these three interpretations are all equally void of foundation, yet as they are all equally orthodox, they might, either singly or combined, be advanced, without raising the resentment of a single person, or subjecting the abettors of them to any inconvenience. But an interpretation, however consistent with reason and truth, which should explain these symbols in the way, which, as Paul says, "men call heresy," would be opposed, with equal violence, by the abettors of each of the three former interpretations. Thus, in ancient times, the votaries of the numerous gods of the heathen, admitted into the number of celestial powers, with the greatest cordiality, every brother that was equally false as those whom they already worshipped; but when Jesus of Nazareth came, really commissioned by the Father of gods and of men, to receive the homage which was due to him, and to establish a religion founded upon truth; the votaries of every false god, without one exception, confederated in arms against him, and endeavoured to blot out his name and memorial from the earth.

I have applied to the two birds those interpretations which have been given of the two goats, not with the



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design of insulting their authors, or of triumphing in the absurdities which men may admit from deference to opinions, which crept into religion in the night of ignorance, "when men slept," but with the design of advancing the cause of truth and righteousness. It is impossible, I imagine, to expose, with greater force, the common mode of interpreting the symbols of scripture, than is here done. I have always complained, that the great body of commentators bring forward every thing in a mass; that all their applications to the ritual are general; and that even when they deign to descend to particulars, they are not only few, but of such a nature, as may be accommodated to any hypothesis. It is by adopting this mode of interpretation, that Dr. Magee makes the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering, and even the pass-over, refer to sin, as well as the sin-offering; and it is in imitation of his example, that I have applied, with the greatest ease, his interpretation, Dr. Parkhurst's interpretation, and another still more popular interpretation, of the scape-goat, to the symbols appointed at the cleansing of the leper.

The path of true interpretation, like the path of true religion, is strait and narrow; and hence it is that few find it. It has already been hinted, that the points in which these two symbolical representations agree, are so few, and the circumstances, in which they differ, are so numerous, that it is impossible that we can give to both one common meaning and import. After considering all the circumstances of the case, I think it is evident, that the bird that was slain was the symbol of the leprosy with which the man was afflicted; and

the bird that was dismissed from confinement unto his companions in the open field, was the symbol of the person who had been afflicted with the leprosy, and who was now released from his confinement to the society of his brethren, and to the common business of human life.

Nor need it be objected to this, that a person and a disease have no common nature, have nothing analogous to each other, which can render it proper to represent both by one common symbol.—Such an objection would, I confess, be conclusive against some popular interpretations of the two goats; for this reason, that as both goats made but one sin-offering, they could compose only one symbol; and hence, could adumbrate only one reality, namely, sin, of which both assumed the name. Here, however, the case is perfectly different.—It is never said, that the two birds made only one offering, or that they referred to sin, or even that they were sacrificed. That a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were employed upon this occasion, is evident; but it is also evident, that the birds composed neither; as we are expressly told that lambs were appointed for these purposes. The truth is, the birds were symbols, but not sacrifices; and they were symbols chosen with the greatest wisdom to represent each its own reality.

The ritual respecting the birds is thus expressed: “Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds, alive, and clean, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel, over running water. As for the living

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bird, he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.”

It is not my intention to advert particularly to the cedar-wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet wool. From the pointed manner in which they are mentioned in the symbols of scripture, as well as from the account which the Jews give of their qualities, we are certain, that they were esteemed conducive to cleansing and purification. From these qualities, then, no matter whether real or supposed, they were employed with the greatest propriety, as an *aspergillum*, or *mop*, for sprinkling the blood of the bird in order to cleanse and purify the leper from his disease, and from the filth and defilement which he had contracted from it.

That the bird, which represented the disease, should be slain in an earthen vessel, was admirably descriptive of the thing signified. The human body is not only in scripture called an earthly house, and an earthly tabernacle, but is actually denominated, by St. Paul, an earthen vessel. This action clearly indicated, that the distemper, which lived in his body, and tormented him, was now slain and extinguished in it; and would therefore afflict him no more. The pure running water—not to mention, that it might adumbrate his blood now running pure and incorrupted by a disease which is well known to contaminate it greatly,—is descriptive of the washing of the body from a filthy disease—

from a disease, which, according to the Mosaic economy, rendered the person afflicted with it unclean—rendered it necessary for him to be shut up without the camp, separated from all society, and unfit for engaging in the performance of any civil or religious office.

The death of the bird, therefore, adumbrated in the most expressive manner, the death, or utter extinction, of the disease, with which the leper had been afflicted, in the same manner as the death of the lamb in the sin-offering adumbrated the death of the sin which the sinner had committed.—Nor can it excite any surprise that diseases and sins should be thus personified, and adumbrated by animals; or that the death of the latter should be symbolical of the extinction of the former. It is what the nature of allegorical writing demands, and what composes the noblest beauties of the higher branches of poetry. Homer's *discord* swelling the horrors of battle; Æschylus's *force* and *strength* binding Prometheus to a rock; Virgil's *fame* spreading the news of Dido's conduct; and Milton's *sin* and *death*, are all specimens of the same figurative and symbolical writing. Not only a great part of the machinery, which Camoens employs in his *Lusiad*, and Voltaire in his *Henriad*, is of the same nature; but almost all the personages of Spenser's *Fairy Queen* are formed upon similar principles.

At the moment when the blood of the bird that was slain was sprinkled seven times upon the leper, to denote the utter extinction of the distemper, and his complete deliverance from its power and pollution, the priest pronounced him clean. This, in the clearest

manner, fixes the meaning and import of the sign, by bringing it in contact with the thing signified ; for to use the symbolical language of scripture, it was only when the disease was put to death, and when the tokens of its extinction were visible upon the body of him who had been polluted with it, that the priest could, with truth, make this solemn declaration.—But what is more ; as soon as the priest pronounced him clean, the living bird, which represented the leper, that the parallelism between the symbol and the reality might be perfect, was dipped in the blood of the disease, if I may use that phrase, in order that the signs and proofs of his deliverance from its power and pollution might be impressed upon him, and was let loose into the open field, where he used to fly at large, and enjoy free intercourse with his companions. Was it possible to adumbrate the situation of the leper more happily than by this expressive symbol?—When the disease attacked the unhappy sufferer, he was looked upon as unclean ; he was taken without the camp ; he was shut up in close confinement, and deprived of all social intercourse with his brethren. But as soon as he was pronounced clean, he, like the bird appointed to be his symbol, was released from confinement, was restored to perfect liberty, and was allowed to enjoy the company of his former friends. Here, with the utmost minuteness of application, the parallelism is complete ; nor is there the least straining or torturing of either the sign or the reality to accomplish it.

Indeed, the more particular this application is, the more easy and perfect will be the application. It would be beneath the notice of a commentator, who

can discuss a very complicated symbol with a single general remark, to attend to such a trivial circumstance as what I am now to mention. Whilst the goat, which in the former symbol, was dismissed, was carried to a wilderness, suited to the barren and uncomfortable nature of sin—to a wilderness separated and cut off from his former haunts and companions, the bird that was let loose, was set at liberty in the open field, or air, in the midst of his former haunts and companions. The former is not more adapted to adumbrate the full and eternal separation of sin from the habitation where it formerly lived and reigned, than the latter is adapted to adumbrate the deliverance of the leper from confinement, and his restoration to his former habitation and friends. Were I writing to the candid and the intelligent only, these remarks would be unnecessary; but the candid and the intelligent compose only a small part of mankind. The ignorance and prejudice, which I have perhaps to encounter, are the only apology which I have to offer for comparing, at every step, the simplicity and consistency of the one interpretation with the intricacy and contradiction of the other.

It is not necessary, I think, to advert to the sin-offering and burnt offering which were immolated after the performance of these symbolic actions; as the explication of these, formerly given, will elucidate every circumstance here mentioned, except the application of the blood to the ear, the thumb, and the great-toe, of the offerer. When we consider afterward the consecration of Aaron and his sons, this action will fall more properly under our review.

The red heifer, whose ashes were employed in composing the water of separation, described Numb. xix., next deserves our attention; not only because it has oftentimes been brought forward in support of opinions which I believe to be contrary to scripture and reason; but also because an inspired apostle. (Heb. ix. 13) asserts, that, in some measure, it answered the same purpose under the law, which the blood of our Saviour does under the gospel.

That men, when in their writings they employed personification, have been always accustomed to appropriate to vice and virtue in general, as well as to particular vices and virtues, robes of certain colours, which they imagined had in their nature and qualities something congenial to the personages that were said to wear them, is proved by the history of every age. Thus a single epithet, from habit and association, raised in the mind of the reader a long train of ideas; and served the same purpose as a laboured description. The white garments of innocence, the crimson robes of murder, and the sable mantle of grief, are acknowledged by almost every language, and are constantly employed by poets and orators, to give animation and spirit to their descriptions, and to convey the most important truths, with equal clearness and greater force, than any literal description could do.

The colour of the heifer, which was employed in this symbol, was, doubtless, chosen in reference to the practice alluded to. The nature of symbolical writing would have authorized this supposition, though we could have obtained no positive evidence of it. But the word of God gives us sufficient reason to conclude,

that as white was appropriated to innocence, so red or crimson was appropriated to sin. Isaiah i. 18,\* will illustrate and confirm this. Having addressed the Jews in the following manner, "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well;" he adds, "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Here, then, the garb of sin is clearly ascertained to be red or crimson.

Now, as the heifer was appointed to be the symbol of sin, it was highly proper that the colour of the sign should correspond to the colour which custom had assigned to the thing signified. It thus served as an index to point out to the inquirer the proper interpretation, and to confirm it when explained. This circumstance, then, without any other, might have conducted us to the real import of the symbol; but here we have direct evidence from the inspired writer himself. Our translators, being not only entirely ignorant of the real meaning of these symbols, but attached to an hypothesis directly contrary, imagined, from this unhappy prejudice, that the language of scripture, which, with a graphic exactness, describes the doctrines of scripture, was sometimes almost unintelligible; and thinking that a literal translation would either convey no meaning at all, or a very obscure one, gave a paraphrase of the original, which, as near as possible, might correspond with their own hypothesis. Hence it is that, in Numb. xix. 9, our translators render the words *והוא חור חטאת*, *it is a purification for sin*, which only



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signify, *it is sin*; the words, *a purification for*, being added. This, then, identifies the symbol and the reality, and proves that the heifer was the emblem of sin as clearly as the declaration of our Saviour, "This bread is my body, and this wine is my blood," proves that the bread and wine were emblems of his body and blood.

It is curious that Dr. Magee seems, in some measure, to have seen this, and yet remained completely ignorant of the true meaning of the symbol. His words (Vol. I. p. 336) are as follow: "Respecting the case of the burnt heifer, in which, though intended solely for the purification of external uncleanness, the ashes are expressly called *the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin*, it must be noted, that the argument here is chiefly derived from the words of the translation, without attending sufficiently to the original: the words in the Hebrew signifying literally, *the ashes of the burnt sin-offering*. *Purification for sin*, then, is not the language of the original; and from this consequently nothing can be inferred." Such are the words of the ingenious Professor, who knew as well as any man, when it advanced his design, how to canvas translations. It is, however, an instructive fact, that in this quotation he falls into the very error he condemns, or, rather, adopts as much of it as he has occasion for. He must have seen, that in the original there is nothing to correspond to the word *offering*, and yet, when he rejected, and rejected justly, the *purification for* of our translators, he ought not to have imposed upon us his own *offering*. All that the original contains is, *the ashes of the burnt sin*, or, *the ashes of the burning of*

sin ;—words which lay a foundation for my interpretation which cannot be shaken.

The reader, however, is by no means to imagine that I condemn our translation as if it expressed an idea contrary to the meaning of the original. It is a truth, and a truth which, in all my inquiries, I have endeavoured to keep constantly in view, that the primary end of this, as well as of every other symbol that had any reference to sin, was to promote the purification of the sinner, that he might be covered with holiness. But, then, this is rather a consequence which results from the idea which the Hebrew expresses, than the idea itself. The common version, therefore, labours under the same objection as if the words of our Lord, “This is my body,” were rendered by a Calvinist, This is the symbol of my body; or by a Lutheran, This is consubstantiated into my body; or by a Romanist, This is transubstantiated into my body.—Now, though I am convinced that the first of these is the real meaning of our Saviour, yet I would oppose the insertion of it into the text of scripture nearly as much as I would any of the others; because it does not contain the simple words of Christ; because it adds to the original; and because it takes from the expression all its peculiarity, which, when compared with similar expressions, tends to explain and confirm the whole. When the inspired writer, then, says of the heifer, “This is sin,” and calls its ashes, “the ashes of the burnt sin,” he supplies us with an argument that the animal was the symbol of what it bore the name, equally strong as our Saviour does, that the bread and wine were symbols of his body and blood, when he

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said of them, "This is my body," and "This is my blood."

Having thus proved that the red heifer was the symbol of sin, we shall easily see the import of the ceremonies attending it. Indeed, many of these bear such a striking resemblance to the ceremonies that accompanied the common sin-offering, that their interpretation may be left to the ingenuity of the reader. To mark the utmost detestation of sin—the necessity of removing it from their dwellings—the duty of putting it to death, from a regard to the command of God, the Jews were commanded to carry the symbol of it without the camp, to slay it before the face of the priest, and to sprinkle some of its blood directly before the tabernacle seven times.

A few remarks more will explain the ceremonies that remain. The whole heifer was to be burnt with fire, into which cedar-wood, scarlet, and hyssop, were to be cast. The ashes were then to be collected, and, being mixed in water, composed what our translators call a *water of separation*. This water was appointed to sprinkle the unclean, in the manner described from the seventeenth verse to the end of the chapter, for the sole purpose of "purifying him, that he may be clean."

It is evident that the ashes of the heifer, mixed with running water, were designed, in some cases, to accomplish a similar purpose, as was the sin-offering. It is not necessary for my purpose, nor indeed for any useful purpose, to draw the line of distinction between those sins or uncleannesses which might be cleansed by the one, and those which required the other. Were I to affirm, that the water of separation was able to

purify a person from all ceremonial uncleanness, I should certainly ascribe to it a power which it did not possess, as the *puerpura* and the leper required real sin-offerings. Were I, on the other hand, to maintain, that it could not purify a person from any moral pollution, which appears to be Dr. Magee's opinion, from his saying that it was "intended *solely* for the purification of *external* uncleanness," I should deprive it of a power which perhaps it did possess, as it appears to me that something of this kind must have been absolutely necessary, in certain cases, to supply the place of a sin-offering, for a reason which I am now to mention.

It is quite obvious, that had every violation of the moral law required, for its purification, a real sin-offering, the children of Israel, after their settlement in the land of Canaan, must either have remained for a long period under the pollution of sin, or must have resided constantly at Jerusalem. Indeed, it is not affirming too much, that if the doctrine which many maintain be true, that all our thoughts, words, and actions, are sinful, or are attended with sin, the possessions which were allotted to the descendants of Abraham would not have been sufficient to feed the one hundredth part of the lambs which would have been required for sin-offerings. And though I am convinced that this doctrine is contrary both to experience and truth—is, in short, absolute nonsense—yet it is clear, that as no sin-offering could be immolated in any place but where the sanctuary was erected, some expedient must have been provided for cleansing moral pollutions, in certain circumstances, without a sin-offering. For this impor-

tant purpose, the water of separation seems to have been appointed with the greatest wisdom: for as the ashes of the heifer, when prepared in the place where the tabernacle was erected, could be transported with the greatest ease to the most remote parts of the kingdom—could be deposited there with persons appointed for that purpose—and could be used by any clean person without the assistance of a priest, a remedy would thus be found for all unclean persons who were unable to appear at the tabernacle, either from the distance, from age and disease, or from any other unavoidable cause.

I must now remark, that the name which our translators have given to this water, into which the ashes were cast, does not, even when considered abstractly, convey the meaning of the original. The term נִיר, from which נִירָה, the appellation given to the water in question, is derived, signifies, even according to Parkhurst, whose orthodoxy is certainly unquestionable, in *Kal* and *Hiphal*, to *remove*, to *reject*, to *cast out* or *away*, as *evil* or *unclean*. This undoubtedly is the real meaning of the word, and it is a singular proof of my doctrine. Sin is the only thing which, in every point of view, deserves to be removed, rejected, and cast out, as evil and unclean. To do this, is the indispensable duty of every sinner; and to incite the sinner to this indispensable duty, was the great end and design of this, as well as of every other symbol that had a reference to sin. Parkhurst, from a just regard to the original, calls this composition, *the waters of removal*, which, if it be remembered that it was a removal with abhorrence of the thing removed as evil or unclean, is infinitely

better than *the waters of separation*; for the original word never signifies *to separate*, though passages might be found, like the one before us, where, without depriving them of all meaning, it might be so rendered.

But a false hypothesis, which theologists have adopted, has perverted the term in question still farther from the meaning of the original. All the symbols of the Mosaic economy which have any reference to sin, are admirably formed to denote the utmost abhorrence of it, from its own intrinsic deformity and filthiness, and the absolute necessity of deliverance from its power and pollution, independent of its consequences, or the punishment which awaits the sinner. This, my interpretation has constantly endeavoured to keep in view; and the putting of sin to death, the dismissal of sin, and the waters of removal, or, as I would rather render it, the waters of abomination, are expressions, I apprehend, which denote a hatred and aversion to that which is removed, and dismissed, and put to death, without particularly adverting to the dreadful nature of its punishment. Hence deliverance from that punishment is rather a consequence which results from the import of these symbols, than the import itself. It is a curious fact, that the common hypothesis is formed in such a manner as to give to these symbols a very different import—an import which constantly looks towards the punishment of sin, and our deliverance from that punishment; whilst sin itself, and our deliverance from sin, is at most a subordinate and secondary consideration. In short, my interpretation is calculated to inspire the sinner with hatred against sin; the common interpretation, with hatred against suffering:—the former,

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to animate the sinner to strive against its power, and to obtain deliverance from its slavery ; the latter, to induce him to hope for the pardon of all sins, and a deliverance from punishment.

These remarks are sanctioned by the common interpretation of the name before us. Even allowing that the water of separation had been the proper name, it would certainly have been not unnatural to have made it denote a separation from sin, especially as the water was said to make the person sprinkled with it clean. But this would not have established the common hypothesis, and therefore the name must have no respect to a separation from sin, but to the separation of the unclean person from the clean—thus drawing the attention of men from the great and important duty which the sign adumbrated, to a circumstance which could have little influence upon the heart or conduct. The influence of a false hypothesis is exemplified in Parkhurst, who, after giving, in his *Lexicon*, the accurate meaning of the original word, thus proceeds, perverting the name which he had properly adopted. His words are: “The waters of removal, i. e. the waters that were applied to those who were in a state of removal for legal uncleanness, in order to cleanse them.” This, as I have already said of other interpretations belonging to the same system, has as much resemblance to truth as to make common readers imagine that it is true, and as much falsehood as to give full scope to a fertile imagination, or a corrupted heart, to draw from it conclusions, not only different from the meaning of the original, but even in contradiction to it.

To conclude: The sprinkling of the unclean with

the waters of abomination, had this great moral import, that it deeply impressed upon the mind of the sinner the odious and destructive nature of sin, the indispensable duty of devoting it to death; of removing it with abhorrence from his dwelling; of consuming it with fire; and of bearing about with him, in his intercourse with the world, the marks and tokens of its destruction. The cedar-wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet, from their real or supposed detersive and symbolic qualities, had all an import of a similar kind. In short, the removing of sin, the dismissal of sin, and the putting to death of sin, are all, as must appear evident, the natural and proper causes of the effect to be produced, namely, of the cleansing and the purification of the sinner; and thus the doctrine which I maintain, not merely implies, but bears in its very bosom, if I may use the phrase, what Dr. Magee acknowledges his own hypothesis, Dr. Taylor's hypothesis, and every other hypothesis with which he was acquainted, evidently wants, namely, "a discoverable connexion between the means and the end." This, however, will be fully attended to in its proper place—when I come to consider the doctrine of Atonement.

The time and circumstances in which the passover was instituted, and the many allusions which are made to it by the writers of the New Testament, give to this festival an importance and dignity which will justify a particular consideration of its nature and import.

The term פָּסַח, which is the name given to this festival, signifies, when employed as a verb, *to pass*, or *leap over*. This is clearly expressed by God himself at its institution; and to controvert its truth, or to en-



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deavour to prove it, any farther than by quoting the words of scripture, has always appeared to me a needless labour. Notwithstanding this, names deservedly respected in the annals of sacred literature, have given different meanings to the word; and *to protect, to spare, to pardon, and to propitiate*, have all had their advocates, according to the particular system which each interpreter wished to establish. As all these interpretations appear equally unfounded, I shall oppose to them the words of God, and leave the reader to draw the conclusion.

After having given to Moses directions respecting this festival, the Almighty (Exod. xii. 11, &c.) thus proceeds: "It is the Lord's, פסח, *passover*. For, עברתי, I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, ופסחתי עליכם, *I will pass over you*." Again, when Moses (ver. 23) communicates this information to the elders of Israel, he says, "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when he seeth the blood, the Lord, פסח, *will pass over* the door." And, lastly, (ver. 27,) "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's, פסח, *passover*, who, פסח, *passed over* the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses."

Not merely the meaning of the name, but also the nature of the symbol, has been the subject of litigation. Dr. Priestley, in order to evade the argument which has been brought from it in favour of the doctrine of Atonement, positively asserts that it was not a sacrifice. Dr.

Magee, on the other hand, in order to support the argument in favour of Atonement, as positively asserts that it was. Both writers, I apprehend, have attached to this circumstance far greater importance than it deserves, as the decision of it either way, if rightly considered, can have no influence either for or against the doctrine of Atonement. I am certain that I could deny, with Dr. Priestley, that the passover was a sacrifice, and yet maintain, with Dr. Magee, the doctrine of Atonement: and again, I could maintain, with Dr. Magee, that the passover was a sacrifice, and yet deny, with Dr. Priestley, the doctrine of Atonement. Both authors appear to have mistaken the true import of this festival, and, from that circumstance, an undue importance has been assigned to the point in question; which, from all the consequences which can legitimately result from it, appears not worthy of the labour which they have expended upon it.

Indeed, the conduct of both disputants affords an instructive lesson to those who may enter the same dangerous field. Dr. Priestley, surely, could not be ignorant that Exod. xii. 27, is not the only place in scripture in which the paschal lamb is called *זבח*, a sacrifice, and yet he maintains that it is, without considering that *one* plain passage is perfectly sufficient to establish any point, when all that is opposed to it is merely assertion. On the other hand, Dr. Magee could not be ignorant that the passover might be repeatedly called *זבח*, and yet not possess one single quality which is peculiarly characteristic of a sacrifice, or entitle it to that appellation. The truth is, *זבח* signifies, not only *to sacrifice*, in the proper sense of that word, but also

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*to kill*, in almost any way, especially for purposes of pomp and festivity. In 1 Sam. xxviii. 24, it denotes the action of the witch of Endor when she killed a fatted calf to entertain Saul and his attendants: in 1 Kings x. 21, it denotes the action of Elisha when he slew a yoke of oxen to give a feast to his friends, when about to leave his father's house to accompany Elijah: in 2 Kings xxiii. 20, it denotes the action of Josiah when he slew the idolatrous priests of Samaria: and in Ezek. xxxix. 17, it is employed, both as a noun and verb, to express the slaughter of the enemies of God upon the mountains of Israel. It is impossible that, in these passages, the word can be employed to signify any thing pertaining to real sacrifices; and the same remarks are applicable to the Greek *θύω*. In proof of this, I add, that, in Luke xv. 23, 27, 30, this verb is thrice employed to express the killing of the fatted calf with which the father of the prodigal feasted his friends when his son returned. Hence, as the verb necessarily signifies only *to kill*, and the noun, *a killing*, or *slaughter*, were it a point worth the contesting, it would be easy to maintain, that, in Exod. xii. 27, instead of "it is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover," the words, with equal propriety, might be rendered, "it is the killing of the Lord's passover;" and in Deut. xvi. 2, "thou shalt kill the passover:" and hence, to omit all passages of a similar nature, 1 Cor. v. 7, might be translated, with the greatest propriety, "Christ, our passover, is slain for us." Thus the whole argument, that the passover was a sacrifice, derived from the use of this word, falls at once to the ground.

I also observe, that the passages which Dr. Magee

adduces to prove that “the blood of the paschal lamb was poured out, sprinkled, and offered at the altar by the priests, in like manner as the blood of the victims usually slain in sacrifice;” and “that the fat and entrails were burnt upon the altar,” (Vol. I. pp. 300, &c.) appear to me altogether irrelevant. The first which he mentions is *Exod. xxiii. 18*: “Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain unto the morning.” This surely can prove nothing. It may refer to any sacrifice or festival, as well as the passover. No altar is mentioned upon which the fat is said to be burnt, which is the principal thing in the question before us; and as it is universally known that leavened bread was forbidden upon all the Jewish festivals, and that the Israelites were not allowed to eat any fat, in the sense which that word has here, it must have been burnt with fire upon every similar occasion before the morning of the next day.

The next passage is *Exod. xxxiv. 25*: “Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice”—or the killing—“of the feast of passover be left unto the morning.” The first clause of this verse is general, and hence cannot legitimately be referred to the passover. The second clause does refer to the passover, but decides nothing respecting the circumstance in question. We find from it, either that the killing of the paschal lamb ought not to be delayed to the morning—for the evening of the fourteenth day was the time appointed for that purpose—or that no part of the flesh or fat of it should remain unconsumed until the morning. But what is either of

these injunctions to the assertion\* of Dr. Magee, that the blood, which God positively declares was to be sprinkled upon their lintels and door-posts, was sprinkled upon an altar, and that the fat and entrails were burnt upon an altar?

Again, 2 Chron. xxx. 15, 16, gives us this information: "Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the Lord; and they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses, the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hands of the Levites." Before this can, in the smallest manner, support the opinion of Dr. Magee, he must prove that the blood said to be sprinkled, really belonged to the paschal lamb. Is it not much more probable that it belonged to the burnt-offerings mentioned immediately before it, and which appear to have been offered to prepare or sanctify the levites for the performance of the work assigned them? He must also prove, that the blood, even allowing that it did belong to the paschal lamb, was sprinkled upon the altar; for if it was only sprinkled upon the lintel and door-posts of the temple as a substitute for their own houses, or in any other way, the whole of his argument is rendered nugatory.

—Indeed, I suspect that the paschal lambs were not slain in the temple, but in the houses which the people inhabited in Jerusalem. Dr. Magee is of a different opinion, because the words of scripture may be so interpreted. That they may, I grant; but that they

may not, must also be granted; and, when this is the case, the question must be decided by other circumstances. My reasons for thinking as I do, are, because the passover was positively enjoined by God to be slain in their own houses, or in the houses of those with whom they associated, and we can never imagine that they would violate an express precept without any necessity—and because the text itself seems to intimate as much. From the end of the fifteenth verse, it is evident that the burnt-offerings only are said to be brought into the house of the Lord, as they must have been; and hence this may imply, at least, that the passovers were not; and if this be well founded, as, considering all things, I think it is, the sprinkling of the blood must refer to that of the burnt-offerings. At any rate, if it should refer to the passovers, it could only be sprinkled upon the lintels and door-posts of the houses in which they were.

The last passage brought forward by Dr. Magee is 2 Chron. xxxv. 11: “And they killed the passover, and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites flayed them.” It ought to be remembered, that this is not the same passover which is mentioned in the last passage which we considered. This took place under the reign of Josiah; the other under that of Hezekiah; and hence to consider them as one, or to apply to the one, circumstances mentioned as pertaining to the other, is contrary to every principle of sound interpretation. Keeping this in view, I would ask, How does Dr. Magee know that these passovers were killed in the temple? That they were killed in Jerusalem, I acknowledge; but that they were killed

in the temple, we have no proof. I would ask further, Docs Dr. Magee think it probable that the temple and its courts were able to contain thirty thousand kids and lambs, and three thousand bullocks, which the king gave to the people; and two thousand and six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen, which the princes gave to them; as well as the priests and Levites, and other persons, necessary to kill and flay them in the short space allotted for that purpose; and also the thirty thousand persons, with their wives, children, and servants, to whom they were given, and who must have been present to eat them? In short, this question is sufficient to render the Doctor's opinion perfectly ridiculous. But should we even grant the possibility of wedging within the sacred enclosures of the temple all these sheep, and oxen, and small cattle, and priests, and Levites, and men, and women, and children, and servants,—I would ask, for what purpose is all this to be done? For the sole purpose of breaking the commandment of God, who enjoined the passover to be killed in private houses,—of creating such confusion in the temple as is scarcely describable,—and of giving, at best, a seeming support to an absurd hypothesis. \*

Without adverting to several other things in which this author appears unsupported by proof, I may mention, that the reason which, from Dr. Sykes, he gives why the imposition of hands was not made upon the ~~pas-~~ <sup>pas-</sup>chal lamb, and which was done in every real sacrifice, appears not perfectly conclusive. "This," says he, is sufficiently accounted for by Sykes, inasmuch as the paschal lamb was the sacrifice of a *company*; and where a company are concerned, no one can act for

the whole, unless there be a proper *representative*; as the elders of a congregation are for the congregation; or persons deputed are for those who depute them; or governors may be for their people." Now, I imagine that the imposition of hands, if it had been proper—which I think it was not, for a very different reason—might have been performed here with the greatest ease upon these principles. Was not every family a company regularly constituted? And was not the father or head of that family its proper representative? What, then, could have hindered him from laying his hands upon the head of his passover, had it been proper in every other respect?

I must add, that my doctrine does not require, that the passover should not be considered as a sacrifice. The point appears to me to be a matter of no importance whatever. If it was a sacrifice, all that I maintain is, that it was very different in its nature and import from any which we have considered.—It is enough for every purpose which I have in view, that Dr. Magee acknowledges with Dr. Priestley, "that the paschal lamb is very far from having been ever called a sin-offering, or said to be killed on account of sin."—I cannot but wonder at the coolness and indifference with which Dr. Magee makes this concession; when compared with the ardour and solicitude which he discovers, when he maintains, that the passover was a sacrifice. The concession "that the passover is never called a sin-offering, or said to be killed on account of sin," would have given "fearful odds" against him to his antagonist, had he lived till it was made, and



known to improve it. Yet Dr. Magee makes it, with other concessions, equally fatal to his hypothesis, in the following intrepid manner (Vol. I. p. 298): “ Dr. Priestley adds, for the completion of his proof, that ‘ the paschal lamb is very far from having been ever called a *sin-offering*, or said to be killed on account of sin.’ But neither is the *burnt-offering* ‘ ever called a sin-offering,’ nor is the animal slain in any of the various kinds of peace-offering, whether in the votive, the free-will, or the sacrifice of thanksgiving, ever ‘ said to be killed on account of sin.’ In other words, one species of sacrifice is not the same with, nor to be called by the name of another.—I agree with Dr. Priestley in this position; and shall not dispute with him any conclusion he may draw from so productive a premise.”—I shall afterward endeavour to draw from this premise some conclusions which will perhaps prove that it is not so unproductive as he seems to imagine.

I have made no mention—though Dr. Magee has—“ of the declaration of the Jewish doctors, the descriptions of the paschal sacrifice in the Misna of the Talmud, and the testimony of the Karaites,” whatever traditions they may reject or support, because it is only to scripture and reason that I appeal. When I have recourse to human testimony—and that alluded to is not of the most unexceptionable kind—to support the doctrines which I maintain, then, and then only, shall I think it necessary to advert to it when it is against me. It is on the broad, the common, the legitimate field of scripture and reason, that I wish to join the friends of truth, and to encounter her enemies;

and if doctrines can be defended there, it is nothing to me, though Jews and Gentiles conspire against them. Let us now return to the passover.

The great end and design, which the passover was instituted to accomplish, was, to keep up the remembrance of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. If, then, the lamb was symbolical, it must have been symbolical of something which really existed at that time, and which was instrumental in effectuating that deliverance.—Keeping this in view, we cannot, I apprehend, hesitate a moment in concluding, that the lamb, which every family slew for itself, was emblematic of the first-born of the Egyptians, whom the Almighty slew on that very night when the chains of slavery were burst asunder, and the Israelites marched from their oppressors with a high hand.

By attending to these observations, the import of the whole ceremony will be obvious and instructive. The lamb, being the symbol of the first-born of Egypt, was to be employed in such a manner as to exhibit the destruction which was brought upon every family. The death of the symbol, therefore, adumbrated the death of the thing signified; and must have powerfully awakened the attention of the Jews to the means which God employed to accomplish their escape. Though absolute certainty cannot be expected upon such a circumstance from the narration of Moses, yet I think it is more than probable, that the period which elapsed from the tenth day of the month, when the lamb was taken into custody, to the fourteenth, when it was slain, corresponded exactly to the period which

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elapsed between the denunciation of God against the Egyptians and the execution of that denunciation.—As the enemies of the Jews were devoted to death by God, and not by themselves; as the execution of the sentence was effected by God, and not by themselves; it would have been improper for the Father or representative of the family to lay his hands upon the head of his passover, as that ceremony, according to the interpretation formerly given, invariably denoted the resolution of the person, who made the imposition, that he would himself employ that which the symbol adumbrated in the manner which the circumstances of the case pointed out. As it was not the Israelites who devoted the Egyptians to destruction; as the lamb adumbrated no duty which they were called to perform; a ceremony which indicated these could not have been enjoined them with any propriety. This, therefore, fully accounts for the absence of this emblematic action.—The sprinkling of the blood upon the lintel and side-posts of their doors, whilst they were confined within, denoted, that before the doors of their prisons could be thrown open; before they could be restored to freedom; the blood of their enemies was to be shed; and the gate, through which they were to escape from slavery, was to bear the evident signs and tokens of it.—The charge, not to break a bone of the victim was highly instructive; as it marked, in the most expressive manner, the way in which their deliverance was effected—that it was effected not by human, but by divine power; that not by the sword, and the spear, and the battle-ax, which mangle, and crush, and break to pieces the bones of the enemy,

were their bands to be broken, but by the hand of God ; whose power is not the less felt because it is unseen ; who inflicts the most dreadful vengeance upon oppression, without the instrumentality of human means ; and accomplishes the most astonishing deliverances in any way that his wisdom sees most proper.—It was to be roasted with fire, to denote that the death of the first-born was not the effect of the common dispensations of Providence, but of the fierce anger of the Almighty, which was kindled against them, and poured out like fire upon the habitations of oppression and cruelty.—It was to be eaten by the Israelites, to denote, that the destruction of their enemies was conducive to their existence as a people, and a source of their happiness and joy.—It was to be eaten by them that night, to bring the sign, as it were, in contact with the reality, and to denote the celerity and decision with which the Almighty accomplished their deliverance.—It was to be eaten with unleavened bread, to inform them, that the whole transaction afforded a most instructive lesson concerning the moral government of God—that he was not an unconcerned spectator of the affairs of the world,—that sooner or later the arm of oppression would be broken, the throne of tyranny overturned, and the fetters of slavery burst asunder ; that the hope of the good should never be extinguished ; that the prayer of the destitute would be heard ; and the wrongs of the innocent would be avenged.—It was to be eaten with bitter herbs, to remind them of the bitter slavery from which they were delivered ; that they ought to join trembling with their mirth ; and, as the cause of their joy and happiness

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was the cause of sorrow and mourning to others, that they ought to feel for the calamities even of their enemies; and to regret, that their obstinacy and wickedness should, as it were, force the Almighty to send upon them the fire of his indignation.—It was “to be eaten with haste, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hands,” to signify in the most expressive manner, that they ought to watch the first signal of deliverance—to improve the favourable dispensations of Providence to the important purposes for which they were given—to snatch the glorious opportunity of bursting from the fetters of inglorious slavery, of advancing in the march of freedom, and of rising to the dignity of men.—And they were not to go out of the doors of their houses until the morning; to prove that the destruction of their enemies was effected not by man, but by God; and to inform them, that they should wait for the proper time, when the dawn of liberty should rise upon them; that they should not attempt to anticipate times which they could not hasten; nor, to force circumstances over which they had no power; for inconsiderate rashness, which offers violence to every calculation of sound policy, is equally hostile to the success of great and splendid enterprises, as the want of decision and promptitude, when Providence calls for them.—Thus every circumstance respecting the passover is easily and fully explained.

It must not be concealed, that an interpretation very different from this is commonly adopted.—“For what purpose, then,” says Dr. Magee, (Vol. I. p. 305,) “can we conceive such a ceremony to have been instituted,

but as a sensible token of the fulfilment of the Divine promise of protection and deliverance? And are we not, from the language of scripture, fully authorized to pronounce, that it was through this, intended as a typical sign of protection from the Divine justice, by the blood of Christ, which, in reference to this, is called, in Heb. xii. 24, 'the blood of sprinkling'?"

I am not now to question the position, that the paschal lamb, as well as the victims of the different sacrifices, typified by their death the death of our Saviour, as this will be fully considered afterward; nor, that the blood of Christ, in Heb. xii. 24, is called the blood of sprinkling in reference to the blood of the passover, though it is much more probable from the context, that it is in reference to the blood of the burnt-offerings mentioned Exod. xxiv. 8, as this is a matter of no great importance.—All, therefore, that I intend to do at present, is only to shew, that Dr. Magee's interpretation depends upon a supposition, concerning the state and circumstances of the Jews, which is not consistent with fact; and hence, that the interpretation, which depends upon it, must be unfounded.

It is evident, I apprehend, that at the time when the passover was instituted, no particular blame could be attached to the Jews. That they were sinners in common with others, both before and after that period, is admitted; but that is nothing to the point which I wish to establish. The point which I wish to establish is, that they were then guilty of no new and flagrant act of wickedness, to draw down upon them, at that particular time, the vengeance of heaven.—That they were under the hand of "cruel taskmasters, who made

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their lives bitter with cruel bondage," was their misfortune, and not their crime.—The wickedness in question, therefore, and consequently, its punishment, belonged exclusively to their oppressors, who employed the powers which were given them to protect and cherish the peaceful inhabitants of the country, in order to plunder and to enslave them. This remark, though of the utmost importance in the present inquiry, seems never to have been attended to by Dr. Magee, and those commentators whom he follows. They constantly speak, as if the Israelites had been guilty of the same crime as the Egyptians were,—as if the being oppressed by superior power, had rendered the enslaved as guilty as the oppressors who enslaved them; and hence, as if it was an act of mercy in God, not to overwhelm the Jews in the same common punishment which overwhelmed the Egyptians.—Laying aside every thing, but what legitimately belongs to the event in question, it is self-evident, that the Egyptians only were the proper objects of punishment; whilst the Hebrews were the proper objects of compassion: and to have involved the Hebrews in the punishment of the former, would have been as contrary to the justice of God's moral government, as to have made the Egyptians partakers of the compassion of the latter.—It was an act of justice in God to destroy the first-born of Egypt; and it was an act of justice in God to spare the first-born of Israel.

But does not the historian always say, that God passed over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the Egyptians?—Certainly he does: and I would ask, was it possible that he could speak otherwise?—Did

not the truth of the case lead him to speak in this manner?—Could the historian, in consistency with truth, have said, that God slew the first-born of Israel, when he slew the first-born of Egypt?—Or, what is more; could he have said, that the Lord should, or even could, in justice, have involved the first-born of Israel in the same punishment with the first-born of Egypt?—I say punishment; for of suffering I do not speak; and I mention this, not only because I have met with teachers of Christianity who were entirely ignorant of the essential difference which there is between the ideas which these words express; but also, because I wish to inform the reader, that though the children of the Egyptians suffered, they were not, properly speaking, punished; the punishment was wholly confined to their parents.—The truth is, the historian merely relates the fact as it really happened; tells us that God passed by the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the first-born of the houses of the Egyptians; and leaves the reader to judge, from the known circumstances of the case, the reason of his not punishing the one, and of his punishing the other.—Is it not self-evident then, that the reason why he spared the one, and slew the other, was because the one was innocent, and the other guilty of the crime in question? And if this be admitted, the common hypothesis is in a great measure overturned.

I must add, that there is a great inconsistency between the judgment which theologists form of this plague, and that of those which preceded it. There certainly was no more reason for involving the Israelites in the same punishment with the Egyptians at



this period, than for involving them in the punishments formerly brought upon them, by turning their waters into blood; by bringing upon them hail and locusts; or by afflicting them with darkness and disease. Yet they never speak, as if the Israelites had, upon these occasions, been saved from divine justice. —And why?—Because divine justice demanded punishment from the oppressor only; and not from the oppressed. Why, then, should they employ language in the latter case, which would be improper in the former, when all the circumstances are exactly the same? No reason can be given, but this, that it is necessary for their hypothesis; and if this be admitted, the admission is sufficient to overturn the hypothesis. To interpret the passover, therefore, in such a manner as implies, that the Israelites might have been involved in the same punishment with the Egyptians, from the justice of God; and that it was his mercy that saved them from a punishment which they merited, is not only to make suppositions without any support from scripture, but what the circumstances of the case will by no means admit.

- But is it not evident, that if the Israelites had not sprinkled the blood in the manner prescribed, they would have been overwhelmed in the same calamity with the Egyptians? And if this is admitted, will it not prove, that they were really liable to the same punishment?—To this, I would reply, that from the whole narration it is evident, that death was only expressly threatened to those who should eat leavened bread during the seven days of the succeeding festival. This is not mentioned to prove that death would not


have been inflicted on those Israelites who should refuse to kill the passover, and to sprinkle their doorposts with blood, which from chap. xii. 13, I am inclined to think would have been the case; but it is mentioned to prove, that if death had been inflicted, it would have been inflicted upon account of circumstances different from those which the objection supposes. All that my argument demands, is only, that at the period when the passover was instituted, the circumstances in which the Egyptians and the Israelites were respectively placed, rendered it just and proper for God to punish the former, and to spare the latter.—But had the Israelites refused to obey the command of God, respecting the observance of the passover, that disobedience would have entirely altered their circumstances, and would have vindicated the Almighty in punishing them;—in punishing them, not because they deserved punishment before, in common with the Egyptians, but because they refused to obey an express commandment of God enjoined only to themselves.

These remarks are sufficient to shew, that the interpretation of Dr. Magee, and every other interpretation that depends upon the same assumption, must be false. To represent the paschal lamb as suffering in symbol the death which the children of Israel ought to have suffered; when it is self-evident that the children of Israel ought not to have suffered death at all; or, as satisfying, in symbol, divine justice, when divine justice demanded no satisfaction, is, to employ the language of this author, (Vol. I. p. 293,) “an odd species of logic.”—He can, therefore, never “hope to mend

his argument," till he prove that the Israelites and the Egyptians were equally guilty of the crime, for which the latter only were punished ; and, consequently, that if some substitution had not been made at that time in symbol, to adumbrate what would afterward be made in reality, nothing could have protected the Israelites from divine justice. An hypothesis, that thus confounds the essential differences of things ; that violates every moral attribute of the Supreme Being ; and overwhelms in the same common and indiscriminating punishment, the righteous and the wicked, must be as dreadful in the moral world, as war, or pestilence, is in the natural ; each must be contemplated, in its own desolated province, as the awful harbinger of that king of terrors, in whose dark dominions the oppressor and the oppressed—the righteous and the wicked, lie in sad assemblage.

Why, then, was the passover enjoined ?—It was enjoined to impress the minds of the Israelites more deeply with the goodness of God towards them ; not, however, in sparing them when the Egyptians were destroyed, but in employing the destruction of the Egyptians, as the means of effectuating their deliverance from tyrannic power. This is a point of which the reader ought never to lose sight ; and it is equally necessary for him to remember, that it was in breaking the fetters of their slavery, in redeeming them, not from the hand of divine justice, but from the hand of Pharaoh, that God at this time displayed his goodness and mercy to the Israelites.—For a similar purpose, was the passover perpetuated among their descendants—to keep up the remembrance of the great deliverance

which God had wrought out for their ancestors, the happy consequences of which they continued to enjoy. Such a sensible representation of the means by which their salvation from tyranny was accomplished, was calculated in no common manner, to strike the imagination, to impress the memory, to warm the heart, and to convince the understanding. Nothing, therefore, could have a greater moral influence, in teaching the Jews their constant dependence upon God; the gratitude which they owed to him for his goodness in breaking the arm of despotism; and the love and obedience which were his due. Some other remarks upon this subject will occur in the last Section of this Essay, "On the Nature and Import of the Sacrifice of Christ."



## SECTION VI.

*Of the Nature of those Sacrifices, which Persons offered when they entered into covenant with God, and dedicated themselves to his service.*

THOUGH the complete agreement, which has been exhibited between the symbols of the Mosaic economy and their realities, appears to me an undoubted proof of my interpretation; yet as that interpretation is very different from any hitherto proposed; as it overturns too, from the very foundation, some doctrines which have long been esteemed principal articles of Christianity; and gives stability to others, which, however consistent with the moral attributes of God, and the unbiassed dictates of reason, have been condemned by creeds and councils, as inconsistent with revelation, and especially with the nature and import of sacrifice, I cannot refrain from considering, with some minuteness, the use which was made of certain sacrifices, upon some particular occasions, as it will tend, in no common degree, to confirm my interpretation, as well as to explain the word of God.

That to which I more particularly allude, is, that in scripture, we find that individuals, and even the whole house of Israel, entered into covenants with God, in which they solemnly devoted themselves to his service, and accompanied these dedications of themselves, and ratified these covenants by the immolation of appropriate sacrifices. Now, if the common interpretation of sacrifices be true, it must have been a matter of no

importance, what particular kind of sacrifice should have been employed upon these occasions—no reason, but arbitrary appointment, could have been assigned for choosing one more than another; and if many things, perfectly distinct and different, are all equally fit for any purpose, it is self-evident, that no one of them has any particular fitness for that purpose,—or what is the same, that all are equally unfit.

But if my interpretation is true, it must have been a question of primary importance, what kind of sacrifice should then have been offered; for as the sign should undoubtedly have some resemblance to the thing signified; and as the sin-offering represented sin, and the peace-offering, the peace that results from serving God, both these sacrifices would have been improper; and if either of them had been enjoined upon these occasions, it would have considerable weight against my doctrine.—The only sacrifice then, that remains, is the burnt-offering; and as I assign to it a particular import—that it was the symbol of the dedication which the offerer made of himself to God, it follows, that, as according to my interpretation, it was naturally adapted and fitted for these particular occasions, it invariably would be employed. If, then, this be found to be the ritual prescribed, my doctrine will receive great support. Here again we have a fair and legitimate criterion by which to judge of the merits of the two opposite interpretations.

As it would lead me into a very tedious discussion to appeal to every transaction of this kind mentioned in scripture, I shall direct the reader's attention to some of the principal instances only, convinced that all the

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others will confirm the general principle. The first covenant mentioned in scripture is that of Noah, immediately after the flood. Surveying the destruction which men had brought upon themselves by their wickedness, and contemplating the miraculous manner in which he had been saved from the general calamity, it is natural to conclude that his heart would swell with gratitude to his deliverer, that he would be inspired with a love to righteousness, which evidently must have then appeared to be the sole object of divine regard, and that he would hasten to devote himself to God by a solemn covenant. Now, were the Scriptures entirely silent, we should be justified, according to my interpretation, in concluding that burnt-offerings only could have been immolated, to adumbrate the real dedication which he made of himself, and to ratify the covenant which he entered into with God. We are, however, not left to conjecture upon a point of such importance. As the circumstances which are narrated from Gen. viii. 20 to Gen ix. 18, must all have taken place at one and the same time, we may consider them as all belonging to this transaction. There, then, we are told, that to ratify the covenant which God made with Noah, and to adumbrate the dedication which he must have made of himself to God, "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour." Here then the proper sign accompanied the thing signified, with equal aptitude as the burning of incense accompanied prayer when Zechariah went into the temple, Luke i. 9; and if it is granted that the latter event proves that incense

was the symbol of prayer, the former must also prove that the burnt-offering was the symbol of the dedication of the offerer to God.

In Gen. xxii. we have a minute account of all the circumstances that attended the command which God gave to Abraham to offer up Isaac. To this transaction I would particularly solicit the reader's attention, not only because it will confirm the point at issue, but because the remarks to be made upon it will rescue it from some false interpretations. It will not be necessary to prove that Abraham at this time was called upon to give a severe proof of his willingness to devote both himself and his son to his Creator. Hence, in consistency with my doctrine, had any sacrifice been enjoined upon this occasion, it must have been a burnt-offering. This, therefore, is not only what the analogy of the case requires, but what the word of God confirms. Hence the conversation between Isaac and his father unfolds to us the nature of the sacrifice which was deemed proper for the occasion. "Behold," says Isaac, "the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" "And Abraham said, my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." Nor is it possible to read the thirteenth verse without admiring the perfect agreement between my doctrine and the fact. When Abraham was ready to slay his son, a voice from heaven arrested his arm, "and Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind, a ram caught in a thicket by the horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son."

Here then two things are evident:—first, that the



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burnt-offering always attended the dedication of a person to God, as the shadow attends the substance, as the sign attends the thing signified; secondly, that the phrase "instead of his son," which has been so often referred to, as compatible with the orthodox opinion only, is not only consistent with my opinion, but a strong confirmation of it. Had the ram been a sin-offering, this language, according to my interpretation, would have been altogether inadmissible; but when applied to a burnt-offering, nothing could be more proper; for as the victim in the sin-offering represented the sin, it could have been said with the greatest propriety to have been offered up instead of it, but by no means instead of the sinner whom it did not represent. Hence this phrase is never once found in scripture, a circumstance altogether inexplicable upon the hypothesis that makes the burnt-offering also refer to sin. But as Isaac was to have been offered up as a burnt-offering, as is evident from the second verse, that sacrifice could have no reference either to his own sin, or the sin of his father, as the common hypothesis requires, and hence, it could not have been an emblem of what divine justice demanded either from the one or the other. Indeed, the common hypothesis labours under the same defect here, which we found it laboured under respecting the passover,—it takes for granted that Abraham and Isaac were the objects of divine vengeance at this period, and that the arm of justice was ready to inflict the blow. But so far is this from being true, that they were both the objects of divine affection at this very period, and the arm of justice, instead of being ready to punish, was, in fact, ready to protect.

The sacrifice, therefore, which was offered up instead of Isaac, was so far from having any reference to the sin, either of the father or of the son, that it must have had a reference only to the personal obedience of the father, and perhaps of the son; and was, as the whole narrative clearly implies, designed as a symbol of Abraham's willingness to devote himself and all that was most dear to him to the Supreme Being. As the sin-offering was slain instead of the sin which it represented, so the burnt-offering is here said, with the greatest aptitude, to be offered up instead of Isaac, which it represented.

I cannot refrain from bringing forward here the well-known story of Jephtha, as the dedication of his daughter to God will confirm the point at issue, and the illustration of it which I am to give from Parkhurst, will rescue this part of the word of God from the false interpretations of men. The whole event is recorded Judges xi.; and the thirty-first verse is thus properly rendered by the writer just now mentioned: "And it shall be, that whosoever cometh out from the door of my house, to meet me on my returning in peace from the children of Ammon shall surely be Jehovah's, and I will offer to him, (Jehovah, namely,) a burnt offering. Here," continues this author, "are two parts in Jephtha's vow—first, that what person soever met him should be Jehovah's, i. e. dedicated for ever to his service, as Hannah devoted Samuel before he was conceived in the womb, 1 Sam. i. 11; and, secondly, that he himself would offer a burnt-offering to Jehovah. Unclean beasts, and much more human sacrifices, were an abomination to Jehovah, therefore Jephtha could not intend to vow either of these, and if he had, surely

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the priests would not have offered them. Such a vow would have been to the last degree wicked and absurd, and next to impossible to have been performed." To these judicious remarks which the author confirms by some similar expressions of the Hebrew Scriptures, I beg leave to add, that we have here the symbol and the reality placed before us in such a clear and distinct manner as renders it next to impossible to misinterpret them. Jephtha, according to his vow, was about to dedicate his daughter to the service of God in attendance upon the sanctuary; and he promised to offer up at the same time that particular sacrifice which God had appointed as the symbol of such a dedication.—What confirmation my interpretation receives from this event it is unnecessary to mention.

I shall direct the reader's attention only to one instance more, but an instance of singular importance. Few events have ever been exhibited upon the theatre of the world which, from their own nature, from the persons concerned, and from their important consequences, can at all be compared with the covenant which God made with the Israelites at Mount Sinai. Hence, in direct opposition to the traditions of men, it is called by an inspired apostle *the first covenant*, because it was not only the first in dignity, but the first that God ever made with a whole people, and by which he established a new religion. We should certainly expect, then, that when a whole people were about to dedicate themselves to God by a solemn covenant, and to ratify that covenant by sacrifice, the sacrifice appointed for that purpose would be emblematic of their duty, and of the manner in which it should be per-

formed. Now, then, let us inquire if the fact corresponds with the theory. In Exod. xxiv. 7, we are told, that "Moses took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, All that the Lord hath said, we will do, and be obedient." Here, then, there was an explicit dedication of themselves to God, and a covenant to that effect was to be confirmed by sacrifice. According to my doctrine, a burnt-offering only could be symbolical of that dedication, and consequently the blood of a burnt-offering only could ratify the deed. The historian now must supply the proof. "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel: and he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." This passage is valuable, not only from the relation which it bears to the point in question, but from the information contained in it respecting the peace-offering. It is evident that sacrifices of this kind followed the burnt-offerings upon this occasion—and with the greatest propriety. The people had now dedicated themselves to God, and rejoiced in the covenant which they had made. As the symbol of their peace and of their gratitude, peace-offerings of thankfulness concluded the service of this memorable day. From this transaction, therefore, and many more

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which might be adduced, the conclusion which I wished to establish is put beyond all doubt;—the solemn dedication of the victim, in burnt-offerings, was the expressive symbol of the solemn dedication of the offerer to God; and the covenant which oftentimes accompanied that dedication, or rather, which composed the dedication itself, was ratified by burnt-offerings.

Here it will be necessary to obviate an objection which may be thought hostile to this conclusion. It may be said, then, that the nature of the sacrifices which attended some dedications is not specified in scripture, and therefore these may be supposed to have been sin-offerings. In explanation of this, an appeal may be made to Gen. xv. 18, where a covenant is said to have been made with Abraham that same day on which he offered the sacrifices mentioned in the ninth verse, which undoubtedly confirmed that covenant, and yet in the whole narrative they are never called burnt-offerings.

Now, I apprehend, we have every reason to conclude that these were burnt-offerings, because it is evident from the original, that the *devouring flame*, which our translators have rendered *a smoking furnace*, and *a burning lamp*, and which, in the seventeenth verse, is said to have passed between the ~~two~~ divisions of these sacrifices, was fire sent from God to consume the sacrifices, as the token of divine regard and acceptance. But sacred or hallowed fire, such as this must have been, was never employed, as I formerly proved, in sin-offerings, which, from their nature and import, were always accounted polluted. Hence these sacrifices,

though not named, must have been burnt-offerings, which, from their nature and import, were always accounted pure and holy.

But further, we ought to conclude that these were burnt-offerings, because in every parallel passage in scripture—and there are many such—where the nature of the sacrifices, offered in similar circumstances, is plainly specified, we are constantly told that they were burnt-offerings. When, therefore, every other circumstance is the same—when the sacrifice itself, with respect to the matter of it, as well as the ritual prescribed, as far as it is mentioned, is the same, must not every mind capable of weighing evidence perceive, that the nature of the case requires that that offering, though not denominated in the text, should be accounted a burnt-offering? For my own part, I declare, that had the circumstances of the case been reversed—had all the sacrifices offered upon these occasions, when specified, been denominated sin-offerings, I never should have hesitated a moment in assigning the few which happened not to be defined, to the same class.

But another objection may be started:—it may be said, that, at some of these dedications, sin-offerings, as well as burnt-offerings, were presented; and hence both might have been employed, with equal propriety, as emblems of the same thing. In confirmation of this, too, an appeal might be made to the dedication, or rather consecration, of Aaron and his sons, as recorded in Exod. xxix. 14, in which a bullock is said to have been sacrificed for a sin-offering, as well as two rams, afterward mentioned, which are said to have been burnt-offerings.

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Now, it appears to me, that this objection, when fully investigated, will afford an *indubitable* proof of the very doctrine which it is brought to overturn. To make this appear, I would remark, that it is evident from the whole narrative, that the sin-offering did not belong to the dedication, far less to the consecration, of Aaron and his sons, as the objection supposes, but was only preparatory to them. That the reader may have a clear conception of the whole transaction, he ought to remember, that it naturally divides itself into three parts, to each of which an appropriate symbol was appointed. Aaron and his sons, it is evident, were to appear in two different capacities—as private members of the church of God, and as ministers of religion. Now, as the former, a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were absolutely necessary for them; and, as the latter, a ram of consecration was requisite, which, from its character, appears to have been partly a burnt-offering and partly a peace-offering. In every passage of scripture, therefore, where these different sacrifices are mentioned, the order which my interpretation requires is invariably observed. The sin-offering precedes the dedication of the offerer, who is then supposed to be a sinner; the burnt-offering accompanies the dedication of the offerer to God, as a man freed from sin and alive to righteousness; and the sacrifice of consecration follows this, as the symbol of the person, who is not only dead to sin and alive to righteousness, but who is to be set apart, even from the assembly of the righteous, to hold a more intimate relation to God, and to be admitted to a more familiar communion with him. Nor is it difficult to perceive the reason of this. In order that

Aaron and his sons might, as men, testify their abhorrence of sin, and their steady resolution to put it to death, by sincere repentance, the sin-offering, as the appointed symbol of this primary duty, was absolutely necessary. But it was not enough for them, even as men, that they should "cease to do evil;" it was equally necessary that they should "learn to do well." That they might dedicate themselves, therefore, to God in the practice of righteousness, a burnt-offering, as the appointed symbol of this important duty, was likewise absolutely necessary. But Aaron and his sons were now to assume a new character and office; they were to be consecrated priests to God, and hence a sacrifice of consecration became necessary, as the appointed symbol of the duty which, as ministers of religion, they were now called to perform.

The reader ought to observe, that these three symbols, and their corresponding realities, are not only necessary and just, but necessary and just in the order in which they are presented in the ritual. The sin-offering and its reality are naturally preparatory to the burnt-offering and its reality; and the burnt-offering and its reality are naturally preparatory to the consecration-offering and its reality. It is evident, then, that the sin-offering has nothing to do with the dedication which a man makes of himself to God. The burnt-offering is the only symbol that can accompany it, because it is the only symbol that is formed and adapted to resemble it; and when that dedication is made with the formality of a covenant, as it sometimes is, the blood of a burnt-offering can only ratify it. In short, the sin-offering that preceded this dedication has



no more right to be accounted the symbol of it, upon that account, than the consecration-offering has because it succeeded it. Each had its own distinct reality to adumbrate, and each was admirably adapted for its own particular end.

Nor is it to be objected, that, in the case before us, the dedication of Aaron and his sons ought rather to be accounted the reality of the consecration-sacrifice, than of the burnt-sacrifice. Indeed, were this even granted, it would not have the least influence in favour of the sin-offering, which is the principal point in question ;—but as it would overturn the general principle with which I set out, and in some measure derange the simplicity and beauty of the system of sacrifices, I beg leave to call it in question. I would observe, then, that the dedication which a man is supposed to make of himself in this objection, is not, in reality, the dedication with which I set out, and to which all my reasonings have had a reference. The dedication with which I set out, and of which I said the burnt-offering was the symbol, was common to every good man among the Jews, and had no respect to the office of priesthood, nor indeed to any office whatever. It respected man as a moral and accountable being only—as a private member of the church of God. But the dedication—if it is proper to give it that name, rather than consecration, which I am confident it is not—which the objection has in view, is in many things perfectly distinct and different from this—relates only to the ministers of religion in their official capacity, and is evidently subsequent to the former. Hence, as the circumstances mentioned in the chapter before us refer to both these

dedications, I have brought them here before the reader, that the truth might appear more evident from the contrast, and that the subject of sacrifice might receive full illustration.

It is a striking circumstance, then, that the burnt-offering is here appropriated solely to the first of these dedications—to the dedication of Aaron and his sons, in their private capacity, before the office of priesthood was conferred upon them, and as preparatory to that office. This not only proves my general principle, but displays the wisdom of the whole ritual; as it must be evident that a man who had not, previously to his assuming the office of priesthood, dedicated his life to God in the practice of moral righteousness, could not, with any propriety, have assumed that office, or received consecration. But every person must see, that this dedication, though preparatory to consecration, must have been very different from it. Hence there was not only one ram offered up as a burnt-offering, symbolical of the former, but also a second ram, expressly denominated the ram of consecration, symbolical of the latter.

The rites accompanying the ram of consecration, as enumerated in the twentieth and subsequent verses, are admirably adapted to adumbrate the manner in which the priests were to discharge the duties of their office. “Thou shalt kill the ram,” says the Almighty, “and take his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar, round about.” As the ear is the organ

of hearing, it became the symbol of attention and obedience; and the touching of it with the blood of this sacrifice, denoted that they were not to have an “uncircumcised ear;” that is, that they were to listen with the deepest attention to the word of God; that with the deepest reverence they were to impress his laws upon their hearts; and that their souls were to meditate continually upon the truths of religion. The blood was put upon the thumb of their right hand to denote, that as the hand is the instrument of action, they were to reduce to action the laws of God which their ears had heard; that the great business of their life was to do his will; and that their conduct was to exemplify and promote the important doctrines which they taught. It was also to be put upon the great toe of their right foot, to signify that they were to walk in the paths of God’s commandments; that every step of their life was to be in the discharge of the duties of their office; and that they would pursue the way to immortality.

The sprinkling of the blood, too, upon the clothes of the priests, and upon the altar, as mentioned in the twenty-first verse, was significative of the same thing—that they were devoted to God, and were to be employed in his service. It will not surely be necessary to advert particularly to the anointing with oil, to the wafers, to the unleavened bread and the flour, which were employed at this time, as the remarks which I formerly made are sufficient to explain them all,—at least as far as they are connected with sacrifice. I may add, that the rites attending the cleansing of the leper, as far as they coincided with the above, must be

interpreted in the same manner.—He had been precluded from employing himself in any civil or religious duty during his confinement. When he was released from his confinement, the blood upon his ear, his thumb, and his great toe, denoted that all his organs and all his powers were now purified, and might be employed in the performance of his duty.

Thus have I shewn, that the objection formerly made, when properly considered, tends greatly to confirm my interpretation—That the burnt-offering was symbolical of the dedication which the offerer then made of himself to God in the practice of righteousness. It inevitably follows, therefore, that it had no reference to sin whatever; that, on the contrary, it was holy; and hence, that the conclusions drawn from it, according to the common hypothesis, are altogether without foundation—are contrary to the nature of the ceremony, as well as to scripture and common sense.



## SECTION VII.

*Of the common Hypothesis, that the Sacrifices of the Mosaic Economy were Types of the Death of Christ.*

THAT the great end which the sacrifices of the Mosaic economy were designed to accomplish, was to adumbrate the sacrifice of our Saviour, is a doctrine which the orthodox constantly maintain, and which the heterodox, in general, reluctantly admit. This is repeatedly asserted by Dr. Magee in the most explicit manner. Thus, Vol. I. p. 46: “With such as have been desirous to reduce Christianity to a mere moral system, it has been a favourite object to represent this sacrifice”—that of Christ—“as entirely figurative, founded only in allusion and similitude to the sacrifices of the law; whereas, that this is spoken of by the sacred writers as a real and proper sacrifice, to which those under the law bore respect but as *types* and *shadows*, is evident from various passages of holy writ.”

Should it be asked, What advantage could the Jews obtain from sacrifices appointed with this design?—it would be answered, that they kept the death of Christ continually before their eyes; informed them that the Messiah was to be sacrificed in the same manner; and that, as his death was to deliver them from the hand of divine justice, and as they could receive that deliverance only by faith in his death, they exhibited to their view the way in which they were to obtain the pardon of sin, and a right to glory and immortality. In short, sacrifices, according to this system, not only

impressed upon their minds the necessity of Christ's satisfying divine justice by his death, but expressed their expectation and hope that he would die for that express purpose.

The writer just now mentioned not only asserts this, but asserts it in such a way as proves that he thought it impossible that sacrifices could be explained without a reference to Christ's death. As, I imagine, I have done this with the greatest ease, and that the impossibility belongs to his own hypothesis, I shall quote his reasonings at some length, and at the same time request the reader who wishes for full information to consult the work itself. In Vol. I. pp. 56, 57, he says, "Now, in what conceivable light can we view this institution"—the institution of sacrifices—"but in relation to that great sacrifice, which *was* to make atonement for sins, to that blood of sprinkling which was to 'speak better things than that of Abel,' or that of the law? The *law* itself is said to have had a respect solely unto him. To what else can the principal institution of the law refer?—an institution too, which, unless so referred, appears utterly unmeaning. The offering up an animal cannot be imagined to have had any intrinsic efficacy, in procuring pardon for the transgression of the offerer. The blood of bulls and of goats could have possessed no virtue, whereby to cleanse him from his offences. Still less intelligible is the application of the blood of the victim, to the purifying of the parts of the tabernacle, and the apparatus of the ceremonial worship. All this can clearly have had no other than an *instituted* meaning; and can be understood only as in reference to *some* blood-shedding, which, in an eminent degree, possessed

the power of purifying from pollution. In short, admit the sacrifice of Christ to be held in view in the institutions of the law, and every part is plain and intelligible ; reject that notion, and every theory devised by the ingenuity of man, to explain the nature of the ceremonial worship, becomes trifling and inconsistent."

"Granting then the case of the Mosaic sacrifice and that of Abel's to be the same, neither of them in itself efficacious, both instituted by God, and both instituted in reference to that true and efficient sacrifice which was one day to be offered ; the rite, as practised before the time of Christ, may justly be considered as a SACRAMENTAL MEMORIAL, *shewing forth the Lord's death until he came* ; and when accompanied with a due faith in the promises made to the early believers, may reasonably be judged to have been *equally acceptable* with that sacramental memorial, which has been enjoined by our Lord himself to his followers, *for the shewing forth his death until his coming again*."—Such are the words of Dr. Magee.

Now, if this account of the import of sacrifices be true, I have no hesitation in admitting that the interpretation which I have given must be false ; that the wonderful agreement which we have found between these symbols and their realities must be the work of chance, and not of design ; and that the moral influence which we think these ceremonies must have had on the minds of a rude and ignorant people must go for nothing. This subject, then, demands a full investigation.

But though Dr. Magee's hypothesis is almost universally believed ; though, as appears from this quota-

tion, it is constantly brought forward by its abettors with the most triumphant confidence, yet, I confess, it appears to me to be a mere assumption, entirely destitute of all proof. To illustrate this, I observe, that there are only two ways in which it can be proved—first, by an express revelation from God; or, secondly, by the fact corresponding to the hypothesis. Hence it follows, that if we find either that God has declared in scripture that he appointed sacrifices for the express purpose of informing the Jews that Christ was to die a sacrifice for them; or that their sacrifices really gave them this information, and led the faith of good men to anticipate his death as a sacrifice, the doctrine of Dr. Magee must be acknowledged to be true; but if both these modes of proof entirely fail, his doctrine must be abandoned.

When God imposed upon the Israelites a complicated, a laborious, and an expensive ritual, it is natural to conclude that he would give them some information respecting its nature and design. I suspect that his rational and accountable creatures had some reason to expect this information even from his rectitude and justice;—that they had every reason to expect it from his wisdom and goodness is perfectly certain. But numerous and explicit as the instructions of God to the Jews are respecting sacrifices, not the most distant hint is ever given by Moses or by the prophets, in the whole compass of the Old Testament, that the death of the victim was designed to represent to the Jews the death of Christ. Nay, as far as I recollect, the abettors of the common hypothesis never pretend that any declaration to this effect was ever made by God, or by



any prophet in his name;—an undoubted proof that the common doctrine has not only no real evidence, but that it has not even the appearance of it.

I go further and add, that the positive proof of my doctrine which the Old Testament affords is positive proof against a doctrine that is directly opposite to it. When our Saviour said, at the institution of his supper, "This bread is my body," and "This wine is my blood," did he not truly and expressly declare, that the bread was the symbol of the one, and the wine the symbol of the other? Now is it possible to admit this without admitting at the same time, that when the Almighty says of the victim of the sin-offering, 'This is sin, and of the victim of the peace-offering, 'This is peace, he truly and expressly declares that the one was the symbol of sin, and the other the symbol of peace? Indeed this argument is perfectly conclusive, and must not only establish my doctrine, but infallibly overturn a contrary hypothesis. Should it be said, that this is only conclusive against the common interpretation of the sin and peace-offering, and hence the design of the burnt-offering may have been to adumbrate the death of Christ, I would reply, that the Scriptures are as silent respecting this import of the burnt-offering as of any other. Nor is this all; we have the express declarations of scripture to oppose to this mere supposition, which must for ever set it aside. I have already proved what Dr. Magee himself acknowledges, that when Moses instituted this sacrifice, he plainly announces its symbolical import, declares that it was designed to adumbrate the offerer himself, and that God would accept of it instead of him. To make the Scriptures

say, then, that it was designed to adumbrate one person, and that it would be accepted for him, when it was really designed to adumbrate another person, and could therefore only be accepted for that other, is to attribute to the word of God the greatest contradiction.

Nor is it a consideration of small importance, that all the facts stated and confirmed by many appropriate examples in the last Section are in direct contradiction to the common hypothesis, and perfectly consistent with my doctrine. That incense was the symbol of prayer, I have already said is apparent from the account given of it in the first chapter of Luke.—And why? Because the symbol and the reality are there, as it were, brought in contact—are there placed parallel to each other in such a manner as infallibly to prove that the one was the sign, and the other the thing signified. But in the examples alluded to, the dedication of the victim in the burnt-offering, and the dedication of the offerer, or of the person for whom the victim was offered, as in the case of Isaac and of Jephtha's daughter, are as clearly identified, so that the one must have been designed as the symbol of the other. The striking fact, too, that in the burnt-offering there was no confession of sin, nor any reference to sin at all; nay, that the whole ritual concerning it precluded the possibility of any such confession, or reference, renders the common import, as well as the conclusions which are drawn from it, perfectly inadmissible. Hence the burnt-offering, as well as every other, had its complete fulfilment in the temper and conduct of the offerer, and was one of the works of the law, designed to adumbrate and to promote the righteousness of the law among the Israelites.

But again: the grand import of the Mosaic sacrifices is, in scripture, marked in a manner that is indirect, I acknowledge—but which, from that very circumstance, must have a greater influence upon our belief. When we find declarations made in scripture respecting sacrifices, not with a design to fix their import, which is already supposed to be perfectly understood; but, for example, to correct abuses which had been made of them: and when these declarations necessarily suppose the truth of one interpretation, and are altogether inexplicable according to another; it is evident, that the indirect manner in which this evidence for the former is obtained, gives it double weight, as it proves that that interpretation was constantly present to the mind of the Jews, and blended itself with all their general discourses and reasonings. As this is an argument of great importance, it will be necessary fully to explain it, by a reference to examples.

I assume it, as a first principle, which no person, whatever be his hypothesis, can controvert, without rendering his hypothesis, or his understanding, suspected, that, if sacrifices were symbolical, they could have no intrinsic excellence, they could not be enjoined for their own sake. Taking this for granted, it clearly follows, that, as symbols, they must have derived all their value from the realities to which they referred; or as means, from the end which they were designed to accomplish. From this we are infallibly led to another conclusion, that if ever it should happen, that the Jews should so far lose sight of the real nature and character of these sacrifices, as to perform them without any regard to their real import—as to

rest satisfied with the sign and neglect the thing signified; to place their confidence in the means, and despise the end—this performance would be altogether in vain. Keeping this in view, then, it is self-evident, that if ever God, by his prophets, should reprove his people for such preposterous conduct—should inform them that the symbol without the reality, was like a shadow without a substance, perfectly useless; nay, was even worse—was an abomination in his sight; and at the same time, should repeatedly, and in the most express manner, specify what was wanting to give it a value and importance—what was wanting to make it acceptable in his sight, that thing which he specified, and which he declared was wanting must have been the very thing which it was designed to signify and adumbrate.

As I imagine, that the steps of this reasoning are as clear as the reasonings of mathematics, no proof will be necessary; but as the conclusion which results from it, is of primary importance, I shall endeavour to confirm and illustrate it, by a particular application to the two interpretations now under review.

Let us then suppose, that sacrifices were designed to adumbrate the death of Christ, and that, if they failed to do so, they were performed in vain; should we not conclude with the greatest certainty, that if God were to reprove the offerers for such conduct, he would use such language as the following: “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. Bring no more

vain oblations ; incense is an abomination unto me ; the new-moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with. Your sacrifices have altogether failed in the work assigned them ; they have not directed your attention to the great sacrifice which they were appointed to adumbrate ; and the death of your future Saviour has never entered into your thoughts.— But when you see your victims, look unto the great victim which is yet to come ; when you contemplate the wound which the priest inflicts upon the symbol, contemplate the wound which divine justice will inflict upon the great reality ; and when you behold the death of the lamb or bullock, behold, at a distance, the death of Christ.—Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord ; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” ?

Or, to take an example of a different kind : suppose a man, in the sincerity of his heart, had addressed his Maker in the following manner : “ Wherewith shall I come before the Lord ; and bow myself before the high God ? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old ? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ? ” Should we not, upon the common hypothesis, have expected the following answer ? — “ He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to look unto Jesus, the only proper sacrifice ; to believe in his blood, which is the great reality which all other sacrifices typify ; and

from which they all derive their value ; and to trust in his death as perfectly sufficient to procure for you the pardon of sin, the friendship of God, and a right to heaven?"—Such, I apprehend, would be the language of scripture, were the common hypothesis true.

We must now do the same justice to my interpretation.—Let us suppose, then, that sacrifices were appointed to adumbrate the temper and conduct of the offerer ; to prefigure and promote among the Jews the practice of moral righteousness ; and that if they failed of doing this, they were performed in vain ; should we not conclude, that when they did fail, God would reprove them in such language as the following : " To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me ? saith the Lord : I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts ; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. Bring no more vain oblations ; incense is an abomination unto me ; the new-moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with. Your sacrifices have altogether failed in the work assigned them ; they have not directed your attention to the great sacrifice of personal righteousness ; and the death of sin, and the practice of moral goodness, have never entered into your thoughts.—But wash ye, make you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do well ; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.—Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord ; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" ?

Or, to take an example of a different kind: suppose a man, in the sincerity of his heart, had addressed his Maker in the following manner: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Should we not, upon my interpretation, have expected the following answer?—"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Such, I apprehend, would be the language of scripture, were my interpretation true.

Having thus stated the case with the utmost fairness and impartiality—truth, as she requires not, disdains any thing else—need I ask, which of the two interpretations is consistent with the passages of scripture which are here alluded to?—I must add, the mode which I have adopted of judging and of ascertaining the respective merit of each interpretation, is so just and evident, is so favourable to truth, and hostile to error, on what side soever either may lie, that I am persuaded no man, who has a sincere regard to truth, and a detestation of error, whatever may be his opinion, would shrink from the consequences.

I must likewise remark, that the conclusion to which we are thus necessarily conducted, is not supported by these two passages only. Whilst the whole tenor of the Old Testament bears not the least allusion to the

common doctrine, it continually supposes the truth of the doctrine which I maintain. Not to insist upon numberless detached sentences, like the following—“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;” “Offer unto God the sacrifices of righteousness;” “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord;” “Let my prayer be set forth before thee like incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice;” all of which evidently point to that moral righteousness which was adumbrated by these rites, and which gave to these rites all their value—there are numerous passages, which at great length establish the conclusion which I have in view. The answer of Samuel to Saul, who spared the best of the sheep and oxen of the Amalekites, which he ought to have destroyed, in order, as he said, to sacrifice them to God, is perfectly in point. 1 Sam. xv. 22: “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken than the fat of rams.” Psalm i. 7, &c., cannot be forgotten: “Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee!—I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thine house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer (*Heb. sacrifice*) unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But unto the wicked, God



saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee, &c. Now, consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth (*Heb. sacrificeth*) praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God." Of the same import is Isaiah lxvi. 3, 5: "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not." Jer. vi. 19, 20, is equally pertinent: "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it. ~~What~~ what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me." I shall only add Amos v. 14, 15, &c.: "Seek good and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph. I hate, I de-

spise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt-offerings and your meat-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as water, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Now, it appears to me, that these passages, and many more which might be produced, are quite decisive of the question before us; tend explicitly to shew what was wanting in times of degeneracy to the Jewish sacrifices; and, consequently, what gave them all their value, when properly performed. Hence, I cannot think it possible for a man of sense and candour to read these texts, and not to feel that they prove—and prove still more forcibly, because indirectly—that moral righteousness alone was what sacrifices was designed to adumbrate and to promote. Had the Almighty, in the same manner as he contrasts the mere performance of sacrifice with moral righteousness, constantly contrasted the mere performance of sacrifice with the sacrifice of Christ,—had [He] declared, that faith in the latter ought to have accompanied the performance of the former; and what is more, that faith in the latter, as the substance and the reality, would compensate for the want of the former, as being only the symbol or shadow; I candidly acknowledge, that this Essay would not have been written.

But it will be said, that as moral righteousness, even according to the common hypothesis, is of secondary importance, it follows, that when the Jews neglected it, it was proper and necessary that God should reprove

them.—Certainly it was ; but it was not proper, and consequently it could not be necessary, to reprove them in the manner in which it is done. If the design of the Mosaic sacrifice was to adumbrate the sacrifice of Christ, it is obvious, that whilst it did this, it accomplished the end of its institution, and consequently its performance was proper and necessary. Upon this supposition, then, where was the propriety of contrasting the performance of one duty with another—the performance of sacrifice with moral obedience?—and what is more—the propriety of doing this in the manner in which it is done? — Whilst sacrifice accomplished its legitimate end, is it possible to conceive that God would say to the Jews with indignation, “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand?”—Might not the Jews, upon this supposition, have answered, Thou hast required them, and required them for the express purpose to which we apply them—for the express purpose of adumbrating the better sacrifice of thy Son, which we constantly keep in view. Upon this supposition, the proper performance of sacrifice would not have compensated, I confess, for the want of moral righteousness; but certainly, every person will acknowledge that it must have preserved itself from blame: yet, when it is supposed to have accomplished its proper end, it is not only declared to be useless, but what is utterly inconceivable, it is declared to be an abomination.

To give this reasoning its full effect, I will reverse the supposition—I will suppose that the Jews continued diligent in the performance of moral righteousness, but lost sight of the sacrifice of Christ—the only import of sacrifice. Now, upon this supposition, do you imagine it possible for God, when reproving them for not directing their attention to the death of his Son, to have used the following language: “To what purpose is the multitude of your moral virtues unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of your deeds of justice, and your acts of faithfulness: I delight not in kindness, in charity, in brotherly-affection. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand? Bring no more vain obedience; truth is an abomination unto me: your patience, your contentment, your resignation unto me, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even all moral righteousness. But look unto Jesus, the great victim; behold the sacrifice which he is yet to offer up, and firmly believe that he is to die in your stead. Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” If, upon the latter supposition, it would be impious to put the language here employed into the mouth of God, I am certain, that every principle of just reasoning will lead us to acknowledge, that upon the former supposition, it would be equally impious to put into his mouth the language which the prophet employs in the passage alluded to.

It will perhaps be said, that the conduct of the Jews did not correspond to any of these suppositions—that they not only neglected moral righteousness, but like-

wise lost sight of the real meaning and import of their sacrifices. This, however, is so far from overturning my reasoning, that it is the very point to which I wished the question should be brought; the very confession which establishes my conclusion. I admit, then, upon this supposition, that it was proper, and, to give the common doctrine every indulgence, that it was equally proper to reprove the Jews for their wickedness in both these respects—for neglecting moral obedience, and for neglecting the real import of their sacrifices. It must be confessed, however, that, upon the common hypothesis, there was a more intimate connexion, a stronger bond of union, between the performance of sacrifice, and the neglect of its import, than between the performance of sacrifice and the neglect of moral righteousness. Can we then imagine, that when God was declaring that the sacrifices which he had appointed were an abomination, because they were not improved to the purpose for which they were appointed, that he would never once give the people whom he was reproofing—and reproofing, certainly, with the design of reforming them—the most distant hint of the fatal error into which they had fallen—never make the most transient allusion to the real cause which rendered their sacrifices vain and abominable? Nay, can we imagine that God would not only do this, but, what is more, that he would dwell, not once or twice, but upon many occasions, and at great length, upon another subject—upon moral righteousness—which, allowing it to be of equal importance, had, however, no connexion, no bond of association with sacrifice? Nor is this the whole truth.—Can we

Imagine, that God would thus constantly advert to that foreign subject—and advert to it in such a manner as not only keeps the kindred subject entirely from view, but naturally leads the people whom he was reproofing, to conclude, that that foreign subject was the only thing in which they were guilty—that, if attended to, it would not only compensate for the want of the other, but that the other was never in the mind of the Almighty—nay, that the other had really no existence at all? This, I am convinced, is the true state of the case; and it is so absurd in itself, so hostile to all the ideas which we can form of the conduct of God toward his accountable creatures, that the man who can believe it may triumph in the strength of his faith, but certainly he will have no reason to triumph in the strength of his understanding.

As it is thus manifest that the whole tenor of the Old Testament not only gives no support to the common doctrine, but is in direct hostility to it, we shall now inquire if that doctrine receive any countenance from fact; if the sacrifices of the Mosaic economy ever led a single Jew to expect that the Messiah was to die—was to offer himself a sacrifice, not only more powerful and valuable than any other, but which would give to every other all its power and value.

Before I enter upon this inquiry, which, I apprehend, must decide the point at issue, it will be necessary to make a previous remark. I must, then, state, that the question is not, Did the Jews know any thing of our Saviour?—but, Did the Jews know any thing of our Saviour's death? And, if they did,—Did they receive this knowledge through the medium of sacrifices?

These are distinctions which ought not to be lost sight of for a single moment, for upon them the whole controversy necessarily depends.

Having thus described the field, I would ask, Do the Scriptures inform us of a single person who, from the giving of the law to the death of Christ, was led, by the import of sacrifices, to the knowledge and belief that his future Saviour was to die as a sacrifice? If this be answered in the negative—as I am confident it must be from the entire history of the Jews—is it not astonishing that the numerous and burdensome ceremonies of the Jews, though appointed by God to accomplish an end upon which the temporal and eternal happiness of his church depended for fifteen hundred years, should have completely failed of accomplishing that end—should never have led a single individual of that people to contemplate the death of Christ? Nor am I to be told, that David, (Psalm xxii.,) and Isaiah, (chap. liii.,) and Daniel, (chap. ix.,) not only foresaw the advent of our Saviour, but described exactly the circumstances of his death. That these good men received information respecting the death of Christ, I readily allow; but that they received it through the medium of sacrifices, I absolutely deny. It is self-evident that the spirit of prophecy gave them that information; and this circumstance not only obviates the objection, but throws its weight into the opposite scale. This will appear if we recollect, that, as God never does any thing in vain, we may rest assured, that if the meaning and import of sacrifices had been so plain as the common doctrine supposes—if the Jews had been continually reminded by them of the death

of Christ—the Almighty would not have commissioned his prophets to reveal, in a miraculous manner, what he had appointed an expensive and burdensome ritual of sacrifices daily to reveal.

It is worthy of remark, too, that our Lord and his apostles never once appeal to the typical import of sacrifice in proof of the propriety of his sufferings and death. Our Saviour, no doubt, says to the Jews, (John v. 46,) “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.” It is evident, however, that this has no respect to sacrifices, but to the prophetic writings of Moses, and in particular, I imagine, to Deut. xviii. 15, 18. Stephen alludes to the same passage in the following words, Acts vii. 37: “This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.” Nor can it escape observation, that our Lord confirms this remark in the conversation which he had with the two disciples who were going to Emmaus. (Luke xxiv.) Not only were they entirely ignorant of Christ’s death before it happened, which is all that my argument requires, but when it did happen, they were so far from accounting it a fulfilment of types and symbols, as it is clear they must have done upon the common doctrine, that they account it altogether incompatible with his office, and destructive of their hopes. But what was the language which our Saviour held with them? Did he address them, in consistency with the common hypothesis, and say, “O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that your sacrifices were designed to communicate! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to



enter into his glory? And beginning at the sin-offering, and all the sacrifices, he expounded unto them, in all the types, the things concerning himself"—No such thing. On the contrary, in perfect consistency with my doctrine, he exclaims, "O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself."

But this is not all. These passages not only prove that the only information which the Jews could obtain concerning Christ's death, was from prophecy; but I will go a step further, and assert, that even these prophecies never did—nay, never were designed to—give the Jews any information, before our Lord's advent, that he was to die as a sacrifice. In order to establish this, we have only to attend to the following facts clearly stated in scripture, and which are perfectly decisive upon the point at issue. That our Lord and his apostles never once appealed to the import of sacrifices, as declarative of his sufferings and death, is a proposition which I have just now proved. That our Lord and his apostles repeatedly, and in the most express terms, appealed to the prophecies of the Old Testament for that purpose, is an assertion which has already received considerable proof, and which the following passages will fully confirm.—Acts iii. 14, &c.: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses. But those things which God before had

shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." That this proof of the propriety of our Saviour's sufferings and death was constantly in the minds of the apostles, the following words will likewise prove. Acts x. 39, &c.: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree. To whom gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins"—(*Gr., dismissal*)—i. e. deliverance from them. Now, notwithstanding these predictions, to which the apostles continually appeal, I apprehend it will be easy to prove, not only that they never led a single Jew to know and believe that Christ was to be slain, but, what is more, that they were never intended by God to do it.

The apostle Peter (chap. i. 10, 11) says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time, the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." From this passage, to which I earnestly solicit the reader's attention, it is evident, not only that the prophecies of the Old Testament respected our Saviour's death and resurrection, but that the prophets were deeply interested to know the meaning and import of these predictions, which, as

the same author tells us, (2 Pet. i. 20, 21,) "came not by private incitation, but were spoken by them as they were moved (*Gr., borne along*) by the Holy Spirit." Now, allow me to ask, Did the prophets attain to the meaning of their own predictions? Did they discover that Jesus was to die as a sacrifice,—was to rise from the dead,—was to enter into glory? The apostle will answer this important inquiry. "Unto whom it was revealed."—What was revealed? The real import of these prophecies?—No such thing,—that it was in vain to inquire concerning them, since it was a subject which God, in his wisdom, had determined they should not know.—"Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you." This is perfectly decisive. Nor can I refrain from asking, Who were the persons to whom these prophecies were involved in darkness? Were they men surrounded by ignorance, engrossed with sensuality, and careless of religion?—Quite the reverse! The person here mentioned was Daniel,—a man filled with the Divine spirit,—a man who by meditation, and fasting, and supplication, and prayer, sought with the greatest ardour to comprehend the meaning of these prophecies. Yet even this man—greatly beloved of God as he assuredly was—expressly tells us, "*That he understood not*;" but when he said unto the angel, "O my Lord! what shall be the end of these things?" he received for answer, "Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed unto the time of the end." These predictions are not

to minister to your knowledge, but to that of the age in which they are to be accomplished : cease, therefore, to inquire concerning them.

Having fully established this point, I must be permitted to ask, Since the prophecies of Daniel, here alluded to, are perhaps the clearest in the Old Testament respecting the death of Christ, can we for a moment imagine that the Jews could receive information of future events through the darker medium of sacrifices, which they could not receive in the clearer regions of prophecy? As well may we maintain, that objects which cannot be perceived in the splendour of the meridian sun, may be clearly discovered in the darkness of midnight.—It is needless, surely, to enlarge upon a topic so clear and irresistible.

But this is not all :—we have seen, from Pêter and from Daniel, (xii. 8, 9,) that it was not the intention of God to give the Jews who lived before our Saviour, information concerning his sufferings and death,—that that death and subsequent glory were closed up and sealed from the view,—and that the obscurities of prophetic language were to be opened up and revealed only when the corresponding events should furnish the key for that purpose. Now I would ask, Is it possible to conceive that God would studiously form prophecy so obscure and dark, for the sole purpose of concealing from the Jews the death of their future Saviour, and at the same time would establish innumerable types and figures for the sole purpose of revealing it?—Is it possible to conceive that God would impose upon the Jews “ a yoke which they were unable to bear,” for the express purpose of giving to men, who did not care for it,

that information which he refused to communicate to the best beloved of his people, who could not obtain it from that yoke, and who not only stood in equal need of it, but were inspired with the greatest ardour to obtain it by every possible way? I can easily see how a man in infancy may imbibe an opinion fraught with such absurdities—nay, I can see how he may retain it afterward without any reflection—but I can scarcely think it possible for a man of candour and intelligence to consider it with attention, when fairly exposed, and still to cling to it as a religious truth.

Now, since Daniel could receive no satisfactory information respecting the death and ascension of Christ from all the prophecies which were delivered before him, as well as from his own, what are we to think of those theologians who imagine that the single expression given to Adam in Paradise, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent,” was itself sufficient to give him information of these circumstances? How far that expression referred to our Saviour, was considered when I explained the doctrine of original sin. At present I shall only add, that if we judge of the information which the ancient world received from prophecies merely delivered to them, by what we obtain from their fulfilment, we shall certainly deceive ourselves. A general expectation of a future Saviour, and of a renovation of the world by him, was no doubt obtained from the prophecies of the Old Testament when given; but with respect to any thing particular no information could be obtained, or, indeed, was designed to be communicated. The situation of the Jews respecting the Gentile dispensation, bore a stri-

king resemblance to our situation respecting Antichrist, the restoration of the Jews, and the establishment of the Millenium. That Antichrist is the prophetic appellation of the Church of Rome; that the Jews shall be restored to their own country; and that the Millenium shall take place, appear to me certain from prophecy. But were I to attempt to describe from prophecy the manner and the circumstances in which Antichrist shall be destroyed, the Jews restored, and the Millenium established, which time only can unfold, I should only display my own ignorance. I must mention, too, that many members of the Protestant Church would by no means agree with the declaration I have made. That the Romish Church is Antichrist, that the Jews shall be restored to their own country, and that a Millenium shall take place, are regarded by many at the present day as the dreams of a heated imagination, which have no foundation in scripture. But if the future existence of these facts appear so doubtful, the particular circumstances which will attend their accomplishment, if they shall prove true, must be still more doubtful. I may add, that when the whole system of Providence respecting these predictions shall have been accomplished in one way or in another, and when full light shall have been thrown upon every particular expression of the prophets, the men who shall see them fulfilled, if they be no wiser than many at the present day, will maintain either that our knowledge of them must have been as certain and extensive as theirs, or that we must have been a blind generation indeed, not to see what in their apprehension will be so easy to be seen.

But to proceed—It will now be asked, Were the

Jews, though favoured both with types and prophecies, entirely ignorant that our Saviour was to die as a sacrifice? I answer, they undoubtedly were, and as an irrefragable proof of it, I appeal to the state of that people when our Lord really came.

That there was from the prophecies of the Old Testament, a great and general expectation of the appearance of our Saviour about the period when he did appear, is a fact confirmed both by sacred and profane history. But it is evident, that this expectation must have been highly favourable to the most minute investigation respecting him—must have prompted those who were inspired with it to have recourse to every means that might give them any information concerning his future history and office. Were we then to suppose, that the knowledge of his death, the most important of all circumstances respecting him—indeed a circumstance, according to the common hypothesis, so important that without it the whole religious establishment must have gone for nothing—had been almost, or even altogether, obliterated amongst them, still we should naturally expect that from tradition, from obsolete commentaries on their sacrifices, which we may suppose would now be brought from the dusty shelves of old libraries, and, what is more, from these types themselves which their Scriptures described, and which they daily practised, the death of their Messiah—if so clearly adumbrated as modern theologians affirm—must at once have presented itself to their view. So far is this, however, from being the case, that with all these favourable circumstances, when our Saviour came to realize their expectations, not a Jew believed that he

was to die. Nor am I to be told that the reason of this was because the Jews expected a Messiah who was to conquer and establish a temporal kingdom. Should I allow this, which is not altogether true, I should wish to know in what respect this assertion is hostile to my doctrine? I maintain, that when our Lord came, not a Jew had the least suspicion that he was to die—far less, if possible, that he was to die as a sacrifice—and is it seriously to be brought forward as an objection to this, that the Jews to a man believed that he was to conquer and subdue all nations under his government? If I have any knowledge of evidence, the objection is a strong confirmation of my doctrine, inasmuch as a violent death would have been altogether inconsistent with a long and happy reign. Nor when I say that the sacrifices of the Mosaic economy never led a single Jew to believe that Christ was to be slain, am I referring to the great body of that people only, who may be supposed to have lost sight of the real import of both sacrifice and prophecy, but to those virtuous and religious persons who still waited for the consolation of Israel—who really expected the Messiah who was to come.

Now, from the first and second chapters of ~~Evangelist's~~ Gospel we learn that Zacharias, and Elizabeth, and Mary, and Simeon, and Anna the prophetess, all expected the coming of our Lord, and joyfully acknowledged him when he came. But though they triumph in the deliverance which he was to accomplish for Israel, and even dwell upon it with rapture, not one of them gives the least intimation that it was to be accomplished by his death. The only expression which may



seem to militate against this is what Simeon says to Mary, "Yea a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also;" which, it is said, must refer to the sorrow which she would experience at the death of her son. But should I allow this, not to insist upon the obscurity of the phrase, I would ask, How did Simeon obtain this information? Was it from the typical nature of their sacrifices? Was it even from the prophets who had gone before him?—No such thing. It is very surprising that even this obscure allusion to our Saviour's death was communicated to him by an immediate revelation from God. I may add, that all the knowledge which the other persons mentioned along with him obtained of the deliverance which they expected from Jesus, is declared to have been communicated to them in the same manner.

I come now to mention a circumstance which is still more decisive. We are informed, (Matthew xvi. 21, &c.,) that Jesus "began to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Now what was Peter's answer to this? Did it discover the least previous knowledge and belief of the circumstances now communicated to him? "Peter took him," says the inspired historian, "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee! And Jesus turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." This plain narration is irresistible; it must convince us that the disciples of

our Lord had obtained no information of our Saviour's death from all the sacrifices, and even prophecies, of their dispensation. Nay, it must do more, it must convince us that they were peculiarly averse to believe that information when communicated and sanctioned by our Lord himself. This, when strengthened by the conversation of the disciples going to Emmaus, already mentioned, clearly proves that the death of their Saviour not only composed no part of their creed, but was wholly unknown to the Jewish nation ; for had his death been expected by any sect then existing, We may rest assured that the disciples would not have shewn such surprise at its being mentioned. This surprise informs us, in the most convincing manner, that they had not been accustomed even to hear of the possibility of its taking place.

Admitting this, then, and it must be admitted—or the truth of scripture must be abandoned—I would ask, What view does the common doctrine give us of the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being? Does it exalt our ideas of his moral government? Does it exhibit him as an object of our admiration, our gratitude, our love? It must strike every person, that if sacrifices were appointed not to adumbrate the ~~temper~~ and conduct which the Jews were to cherish and pursue ; but to adumbrate things which were to have no existence till our Saviour should come, they must have been appointed altogether in vain ;—the Jews must have been engaged from generation to generation in the constant performance of a complicated, an expensive, and a burdensome load of ceremonies, the end and design of which they could not understand, in which

they must have been even worse than puppets, since they had received only as much intelligence as to know and feel their own insignificance and degradation—since they must have been wearied and fatigued with the daily performance of actions merely that they might be employed, but which could be of no advantage either to themselves or others,—a supposition which, I apprehend, can never be admitted without abandoning all the wisdom and benevolence of God's moral government.

But it will be objected, that this conclusion does by no means follow from the premises; that we see the wisest and the most beneficent institutions of God fail of success by the folly and wickedness of free agents; and that reason itself, and, what is more, Christianity, the most glorious display of divine mercy to man, have been “the savour of death unto many.” The failure, therefore, of the Mosaic sacrifices, in not leading the Jews to the knowledge and belief of the future sacrifice of Christ, must be attributed to their own prejudice and wickedness, and not to any defect in the sacrifices themselves.

Now, I apprehend, it would be easy to prove, that ~~however~~ proper sacrifices were to adumbrate the temper and conduct of the Jews, they were altogether improper to adumbrate the death of Christ, and the Christian dispensation; yet, as I can obviate the objection in a different manner, I shall pass that over at present, and only beg the reader's attention to the following observations.

It is self-evident that this subterfuge depends entirely upon an assumption, which, instead of having even the

appearance of truth, is a manifest falsehood. It maintains that the Jewish sacrifices were admirably adapted to give the Jews information of the death of Christ; it admits, however, that they did not accomplish this in the case of a single individual, and it asserts that the reason of this was the wickedness of that people. But it is manifest that this wickedness must have belonged not to the great body of the nation only, but to every individual; for if wickedness was the cause of this failure, wickedness must have prevailed to an extent equal to the effect which it produced. It takes for granted, therefore, that Daniel and all the prophets; that Simeon and Zacharias, and Mary and Anna, and all who anxiously waited for the consolation of Israel, were wicked, and that upon account of their wickedness they remained ignorant of the meaning and import of their sacrifices. In short, the objection maintains, that from the giving of the law to the death of Christ, there was not among the Jews one good man who feared God and kept his commandments;—a doctrine, surely, that would require for its establishment more proof than has yet been produced.

But, further, it is in vain, upon the principles of the objection, to attempt to vindicate the conduct of God in the establishment of Judaism, by an appeal to Christianity, till it be proved that with respect to the point in question these two dispensations are analogous. But I am not afraid to assert, that if the Jewish economy failed in the manner supposed, Christianity is so far from being analogous to it, that there never was a single thing analogous to it in the history of the world. God,

to take the example alluded to in the objection, has bestowed upon all men reason, for the purpose of enabling them to act reasonably. Many, I allow, by their wickedness pervert it to a very different purpose ; but still, I would ask, has not one single person, from the creation of the world to the present day, acted reasonably ? This, if answered in the negative, would be a sweeping admission against my doctrine ; but who will answer in the negative ? Christianity, too, was established by God “ to redeem us from all iniquity, to purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.” Unhappily, the wickedness of man has too often defeated its salutary influence ; but still the decisive question returns, Has it completely failed of success ? Did it never in a single instance accomplish that for which it was given ?

But this is not all :—As the Mosaic sacrifices are now abolished, they cannot compensate by future efficacy, the want of efficacy in the time that is past. They have lived, and are dead ;—and therefore must have been established in vain. But is this the case with Christianity ? It has not, I confess, been so productive of good consequences as we could wish—nay, ~~as~~ we might reasonably expect,—and the sole cause of this has been the wickedness of men ; but Christianity is yet only in its infancy, and the inspired records which contain it inform us, that although its full effect would for a long time be defeated by the wickedness of men, yet a time would come when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth ; when by its influence all its inhabitants shall be righteous. Is it then pos-

sible, upon the supposition in question, to perceive the least analogy between the Mosaic dispensation, and that of Christ?

Nor ought it to be omitted, that when Christianity fails of accomplishing its end, the Scriptures not only ascribe this failure to the wickedness of men, but inform us in what this failure does consist. But is this the case with Judaism upon the principles which I oppose? Quite the reverse. The Scriptures, no doubt, repeatedly declare, that it did not produce all the good that it might have done, and attribute this to the wickedness of man; but that failure, according to the Scriptures, did not consist in not leading the Jews to believe that Christ was to die for them, but in not leading them to the practice of that purity “which is better than sacrifice, and that righteousness which is far more acceptable than the fat of rams.” This, then, is a thing altogether incomprehensible upon the principles which I deny; but is the very thing which must have taken place upon the principles which I maintain. In short, it is impossible that any argument could have given less support to the doctrine which it was designed to establish, or more to the doctrine which it was designed to overturn, than that which the objection contains.

The truth is, Judaism and Christianity, when rightly considered, are in this respect perfectly analogous. Neither the one nor the other has done all the good which it was admirably formed to produce, and this failure was entirely owing to the wickedness of man. But both did good—and good to a great extent, in the same thing—in reforming the world, and assimilating man to the image of his Maker. The great design of

the law was, by means of its works, its external symbols, to lead its votaries to the performance of moral righteousness. The great design of the gospel is, by means of faith, to lead its professors to the same end. Each accomplished this great and most important end to such an extent as fully to vindicate the wisdom and goodness of God in its establishment—as to prove that it was admirably adapted to accomplish that for which it was intended; and each failed in every instance where the wickedness of free and accountable creatures rendered it proper that it should fail—where wilful ignorance, where obstinate prejudice, where habitual vice, proved that they loved darkness and hated the light; that they counted themselves unworthy of everlasting life; and that they were justly given up to that blindness of mind which they resolutely chose.

But in opposition to this doctrine, which gives such a clearness, a consistency, and a dignity to both dispensations, and to the overwhelming weight of evidence which supports it, it will be objected, that though the writers of the Old Testament are entirely silent respecting the typical nature of their economy; yet the writers of the New Testament are not. Hence the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, (x. 1,) positively asserts that “the law had a shadow of good things to come;” and St. Paul, (Col. ii. 16, 17,) says in reference to the Mosaic economy, “Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moons, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Is it not then self-evident from these expressions, that the shadows or types belonged to the dispensation of

Moses, and that the body, or the things signified, belonged to the dispensation of Christ?

To this, which is the only thing which has even the appearance of an objection against my doctrine, I would answer, that it is impossible, that these passages, when properly understood, can have a meaning contradictory to the facts which I have stated, and which must be admitted as true, whatever be the import of the Mosaic sacrifices.—Though I should allow, that the sole design of the Mosaic sacrifice was to adumbrate the sacrifice of Christ; it would still be a fact, not only which we cannot disprove, but which is incontrovertibly established, that the former sacrifice never led one Jew to contemplate the latter—that the nation, to a man, in every period of its existence, was as ignorant that the Messiah was to be a sacrifice, as if no former sacrifice had been appointed—as if no dispensation had been established to adumbrate it.—Nor is it difficult to perceive, why this must be admitted. It must be admitted, because it is not a conclusion drawn from premises, which, it is possible, may be false, or where some step of the reasoning upon which it depends, may be illegitimate; but it is a plain fact in their history, as clearly established, as that sacrifices were appointed by Moses, or that Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans. A fact of this kind, whose evidence depends upon no process of induction, can never be overturned by any assertion, or doctrine whatever; but must be admitted without any respect to consequences. If, then, the meaning of the passages, upon which the objection is founded, be that which the objection supposes, the conclusion to which we are infallibly led.



must be, that God appointed the Mosaic economy for the sole accomplishment of a purpose, upon which the dignity and happiness of the whole Jewish nation, both in time and in eternity, depended; and which, in every instance, entirely failed of accomplishing that purpose.

But further:—Should I allow that the passages in question really assert that the Jewish sacrifices were typical of the Christian sacrifice, it would by no means remove the difficulties that press upon that doctrine. I have just now said, that it would still be an undoubted truth, that the Jews were entirely ignorant of the true import of their sacrifices—in short, were as ignorant that Christ was to die as a sacrifice, as if no former sacrifice had been appointed. It would likewise be true, that during the whole time that these sacrifices were obligatory, the Almighty kept a profound silence respecting their real import; and though he beheld the mournful ignorance of his chosen people, and the fatal consequences resulting from it; yet he never deigned to give them the least hint, which could lead them to improve their sacrifices whilst it was possible for them to improve them.—What, then, did he do?—No sooner is it impossible for them to improve them, upon account of their abrogation—that is, no sooner is information respecting them entirely useless, than information is poured in a full blaze upon that obscure subject. And to whom was this light given?—Not to the Jews, to whom had it been given, when it was denied, it would have saved them from eternal perdition; but to the Christians, whom the observance of these works of the law could only ruin.—Can an opinion, fraught with such consequences, be

admitted for a moment? Can conduct, not only so foolish, but so disgraceful and wicked, be ascribed to God? What should we think of that earthly parent who should act in the same manner toward his offspring?

To display the absurdity of an hypothesis that leads to such conclusions, we will make the experiment.—Let us suppose, then, that a parent incloses the children of his first marriage in a dark and intricate mansion, stocked, no doubt, with provisions for their support; but which, unless prepared in a certain way, are so far from contributing to the health and vigour of the body, that without giving any visible symptoms of their noxious qualities, they undermine the constitution, and bring on slow, but certain death. Let us further suppose, that the children, upon account of their ignorance, and the obscurity of their abode, completely fail of discovering the only way of preparing their food; that they prepare it in the very way that renders it most hurtful to their constitutions; and that they daily devour it to satisfy their hunger, without the least suspicion of its noxious nature. Let us suppose, too, that the father beholds his children, one after another, perish without any knowledge of the real cause; that he continually reproves them for their folly; but, instead of giving them any information of that in which their folly consists, he insists upon another thing perfectly different from it, in such a manner as to keep the real cause of their sickness and mortality from view. But, to complete the picture, let us again suppose, that no sooner has he got another family of children, by a second marriage, than he

places them in a large and elegant building, supplied with provisions, not only of a far better quality, but ready prepared; and then, when he sees the greater part of his first family actually dead; when he sees the remaining few perfectly unable to remove from their old mansion, to which their hearts, from long habit, are wonderfully attached; when he perceives that their taste and appetites are perfectly vitiated by the unwholesome food which they had ignorantly taken; and that their stomachs are no longer able to relish or receive any other food;—he lays open to his more favoured progeny the whole mystery concerning the provisions which he had provided for their elder brethren; bids them communicate this information to the few that remained ready to perish; and orders them to leave their old habitation and its poisonous provisions, and come and dwell with their younger brethren.—Now, I would ask, would this conduct display and exalt the wisdom and the affection of the father of these children?—If it would, I must be silent!—But if it would only insult the memory of the dead, and sport with the feelings of the living; I must then add, with what force may not the appeal which our Lord made to the Jews in his time, be made to the abettors of the doctrine before us?—“If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him!”

I have now proved, that if the great design of the Mosaic sacrifices was to lead the Jews to the knowledge of Christ's death, and of his religion, it must have been established in vain, as the Jews, during the whole

period of their economy, remained entirely ignorant of both.—I proceed now to state, that even when Christ has come, and exhibited his history and his religion fully to view, we are still very far from perceiving that exact correspondence between the signs and the things signified which the rules of legitimate interpretation would lead us to expect. As a proof of this, I would ask, what are the things in the Christian dispensation corresponding to the various utensils enumerated in the thirty-fourth, and the four following chapters of the book of Exodus? The man who can believe, that each of the things there specified has something corresponding to it in the Christian dispensation, and that he perceives that correspondence, would do well to favour the world with the important discovery.—But I suspect, none will even pretend to have made this discovery. This obscurity, at the present day, is certainly wonderful. If every ceremony, of the former covenant, had a relation to something in the latter; we, who enjoy the latter, could scarcely fail of perceiving it; as those who live after the fulfilment of any prophecy must understand it much better than those who lived before, and were ignorant of the events to which it referred. To imagine, therefore, that the Jews could perceive correspondences to their ceremonies, in a dispensation not yet established, and consequently unknown, which we, who enjoy that dispensation, cannot perceive, is certainly one of the greatest absurdities that ever entered into the mind of man. The reason, why a correspondence has been supposed to be found between the sacrifices of the law and the sacrifice of Christ, will be explained in the end of the

next Section. But from what has been already advanced, it is evident, that in whatever light the common interpretation of these passages is contemplated, it appears arbitrary and absurd; and therefore something more satisfactory must be attempted.

It appears to me, then, that Dr. Whitby, in his *note* upon the passage of Colossians, gives the true sense of both texts—a sense perfectly consistent with reason, with fact, and with every other passage of scripture. His words are, “ Dr. Spencer well observes that there is no necessity, from these words, of asserting that *these*, and *all the ritual constitutions* of the law of Moses, *shadowed forth* some Christian mystery; but only that they were but as ~~more~~ *shadows* compared to the *solid and substantial truth* Christ by his gospel hath discovered to us.”

If this, then, be the true meaning of the passages in question, as I believe it is, it will at once appear, that they are by no means at variance with the doctrine which I maintain. Indeed, without any respect to my doctrine at all, Dr. Whitby, as well as Dr. Spencer, perceived the impropriety of the common interpretation; and thus his interpretation gives my doctrine still stronger support. Every one will acknowledge, that though the law was a wonderful manifestation of divine benevolence and love; and, when we consider the state and circumstances of the Jews, <sup>was</sup> admirably adapted to conduct them to perfection and happiness; yet, when it is compared with the sublimer religion of Jesus, it must appear to be only as a shadow in comparison of the substance.—The manner of expression employed in both passages, is exactly similar to that of

John i. 17: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Whoever, from this declaration, should maintain that there was neither grace nor truth in the law, would argue in the same manner as those, who, from the passages before us, maintain, that the dispensation of Moses was nothing but a shadow. The truth is, there were both grace and truth, in no common measure, in the law; but the grace and truth of the gospel were so much greater, that the former seemed not worthy of being compared with the latter; and are, therefore, according to the Hebrew idiom, spoken of as if they had no existence. Now, in the same manner, though in the law, that moral and eternal righteousness which constitutes the body and substance of all true religion, conspicuously appeared; yet when brought in competition with the righteousness which the gospel required, and incited and enabled man to perform, the inspired writers were fully justified in using these expressions, which those accustomed to the idiom of their language perfectly understood; and which could by no means signify that the former dispensation was the type of the latter; but only, that even the substance of the former was like a shadow when compared with the substance of the latter.

To confirm still further this interpretation, and to display the justness and beauty of the language of scripture, it ought to be observed, that the important duties of moral righteousness, which, I have now said, compose the body and substance of all religion, were not only more clearly and extensively explained—were not only more powerfully and permanently recom-

mended, by the gospel; but by the gospel, were likewise divested of all that external drapery of emblems and symbols, under the shadow of which they had appeared to the Jews; and were brought forward, in their own unborrowed and intrinsic excellence, demanding the admiration and love of men.—Still, however, it ought to be remembered, that the Mosaic economy, by its most shadowy ordinances, was designed to promote, and really did promote, in no common degree, that purity and righteousness which the religion of Jesus promotes in a much more perfect manner, without the aid of shadow or symbol, by the superiority of its laws, the permanency of its principles, and the sublimity of its hopes. Hence, that real body of purity and righteousness contained in the Ten Commandments, stripped of all the ceremonies which were necessary to adumbrate it before the advent of our Lord, was extended and confirmed by him in his religion, especially in his sermon on the mount; was displayed in all its native importance and majesty; and was appointed, by its own energy, to captivate the heart, to regulate the conduct, and to advance the dignity and happiness of his followers.\*


I now conclude this long, and, I fear, tedious investigation, by observing, that as we have seen that the dispensation of Moses had shadows of carnal ordinances, we have likewise seen that it had a body or substance of purity, of righteousness, and of peace. But as this body of purity, of righteousness, and of peace, under the law, was the same in kind, though not in degree, as the body of purity, of righteousness, and of peace, under the gospel, it is evident that the carnal ordinances

that adumbrated the former, must also, though in a very inadequate manner, have resembled the latter ; and hence they must have been “ a shadow of good things to come.” But as the good things present with the Jews were the moral purity and righteousness and peace of the law ; so the good things to come were the moral purity and righteousness and peace of the gospel. Hence, in this point of view, which, I think, is equally beautiful as just, the interpretation of these passages not only confirms my doctrine, but overturns the common hypothesis. It is in this manner, undoubtedly, that the phrase in Heb. x. 1, is to be understood, and by understanding it thus, the delicacy and justness of the language will appear. It is evident that, in this passage, the apostle is contrasting the *σκια*, *shadow*, with the *αυτην την εικονα*, *very image*. By the former, he must have understood only a faint, indistinct, and imperfect resemblance, which, though it might, in some measure, represent the thing signified, yet was very far from bringing it distinctly to view. But by the latter, he must have meant a full, clear, and perfect resemblance, which, being delineated for the very purpose, must have completely displayed what it was designed to represent. Let us apply this, then, to the passage. The ceremonies of the law might well be said to be the very image of the righteousness of the law ; but as the righteousness of the gospel was far superior to the righteousness of the law, the ceremonies of the latter could be only a faint and indistinct shadow of the former, and could not be the very image of it. A more excellent righteousness demanded a more excellent symbol to represent it properly, and that it



received in Christ Jesus. For whilst the sacrifice of bulls and of goats was sufficient to adumbrate the purity, the righteousness, and the peace of the law, the sacrifice of Christ alone was sufficient to adumbrate the purity and righteousness and peace of the gospel. But though the gospel resembled the law, in so far as it had this one sacrifice, yet as it was never to be repeated, the gospel is almost constantly represented as divested of symbols, as it really has been ever since the ascension of our Lord, except in the cases of Baptism and the Supper. Hence it is that the inspired writers so constantly insist on Christ's sacrifice being only once offered, and that that once offering was quite sufficient to perfect his followers, and to render it proper for him to lay aside every such ceremony during the future ages of his church.

Thus, then, have I considered at great length this important subject; have fully proved that the Mosaic economy was not designed to adumbrate the Christian dispensation, as has been commonly thought; have established the doctrine, that the Jews, to a man, were entirely ignorant that the Messiah was to be slain as a sacrifice; and have answered every objection that has been brought forward against these truths.



## SECTION VIII.

*Of the Import of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

THE remarks which were made at the end of the last Section, will be no improper introduction to the subject before us. There I said, that those carnal ordinances which, with the greatest aptitude, were the symbols of the good things of the law, could not be a perfect image of the good things of the gospel, which were to come, though they might be accounted a faint and imperfect shadow of them, and therefore it became necessary that more excellent symbols should be found. I likewise said, that the sacrifice which our Lord made of himself was perfectly sufficient for that important purpose; and that whilst the offering of lambs and goats and bullocks adumbrated the purity, the righteousness, and the peace, to which the wise and the good attained under the law, the more excellent sacrifice of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, was the perfect image of the purity and righteousness and peace to which the wise and the good were to attain under the gospel.

From this it will appear, that, so far from thinking, as many do, that Christ was not a sacrifice, I lay it down as the great point which I am now to illustrate and prove, that he was not only a real and a proper sacrifice, but a sacrifice much more valuable and efficacious than any of which the former dispensation could boast, for accomplishing all the purposes for which these symbols had been appointed by God.

Indeed, nothing has ever surprised me more, than the manner in which great and good men—men ardent in the love of truth, and eager in the pursuit of it—have denied this doctrine, and have endeavoured to evade the proofs of it which are found in almost every page of the New Testament. A clear statement of the reason of their conduct will not only be their best apology, but will be a warning to all who explain the word of God, never to blend with its pure and rational doctrines the commandments of men, lest those truths which are thus unhappily associated with errors, should be rejected and discarded, as equally unfounded, by those who perceive the absurdity of the latter, without perceiving that the former may be defended without giving the smallest support to the other.

The unscriptural and absurd doctrines which have been founded upon the import commonly given to sacrifice, have, I imagine, forced those who deny the reality of our Lord's sacrifice to act as they have done. Not being able to shew that that import has as little foundation in the word of God as it has in the dictates of reason, or to discover the true import of that rite, they have denied the reality of our Lord's sacrifice, that they might deny the conclusions which they imagined resulted from it. This is evident, as it could not be of the least importance to them, or even to their opponents, whether Christ should be considered as a sacrifice or not, except in so far as the decision of that question was supposed to affect their opinions, or those of their opponents. I cannot but add, that my doctrine receives no common support from the consideration that it accords perfectly with the language and

the declaration of scripture, that Christ was a sacrifice, and, at the same time, gives a more decisive blow to the unscriptural doctrines alluded to, than could have been given by contradicting both.

That all the sacrifices of the Mosaic economy may be comprehended under sin-offerings, and burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, was formerly stated; and the real meaning or import of each was particularly explained. But as sanctification, and justification, and peace of conscience—the realities adumbrated by them—not only constitute the duty and happiness of man under the Christian dispensation, but under the Christian dispensation are carried to a far greater extent than under the law, it is evident, that if it be necessary that the sacrifice of Christ should exhibit the very image of any one of these things, it should exhibit the very image of them all. I suppose, then, that if we consider attentively the sacrifice of Christ, and consider the information which the Scriptures give concerning it, we shall find, not only that it was a real sacrifice, but a real sacrifice partaking of the nature of all the Mosaic sacrifices, and adapted to accomplish, in a much more efficacious manner, the ends and designs which they had in view. This can only be confirmed by an appeal to each of the different kinds of sacrifice now mentioned. I begin with the sin-offering.

I formerly said, that the great end of the sin-offering under the law, was to exhibit to the Jews an expressive emblem of the way in which they ought to put sin to death; or, in other words, the offering up of the victim at the command of God was an expres-

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sive action, denoting their fixed determination to offer up their sin in the same manner. As our Saviour accomplished this important end of the sin-offering both in his life and in his death, I shall consider each of these in order.

The whole life of our Saviour, therefore, may be considered as one continual sin-offering, exhibiting, not in symbol, but in reality, the death of sin, and powerfully impelling his followers to the same purity. To give one illustrious example of this, I would direct the reader's attention to his conduct, as described John vi. 16, when he rejected the kingdom which the worldly-minded Jews offered him. In order that he might subdue every temptation and preserve his innocence, he at once made a sacrifice of ambition, of pride, of covetousness, of sensuality—of all those sins, in short, which a man might be supposed to enjoy by the acquisition of a kingdom, when that acquisition could not be made without relinquishing the work assigned him by God.

But it was not so much in the hour of prosperity, as in the night of adversity, that our Saviour gave us the most perfect example of the manner in which he triumphed over every temptation, and devoted sin to death. The truth of this will appear if we remember, that then, with the most astonishing resignation and perseverance and fortitude, he preserved his innocence unspotted, amidst all the temptations to which he was opposed. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that if we consider his sufferings with attention, especially in the garden of Gethsemane, we shall find that every ingredient which it was possible to pour into the cup of

human misery, swelled the bitter draught which he was doomed to drain. Nor is it difficult to perceive the propriety—nay, the necessity—of this. As he was appointed to be a great example to the good, especially to those “who do good and suffer for it,” it was absolutely necessary that every misery which could embitter life, or wrap the soul of the righteous in darkness, should be exhausted by our Lord. And why? In order that none of his followers, in any future period of his church, might ever be placed in circumstances of greater distress, or be called to endure more overwhelming agony, and should thus be left in hopeless anxiety, looking wildly round for an example to direct their conduct, which the history of the world could not supply. All the sins, therefore, incident to man in a time of unexampled suffering, were then offered up by our Lord as a sacrifice at the command of his Father. Strong as must have been his temptations to impatience and murmuring, yet “he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.” Powerful as were his incitements to hatred and revenge against his persecutors, yet “when he was reviled, he reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously.” Numerous and specious as were the reasons which the wisdom of the world might have adduced for wearying in well-doing, for distrust in the Supreme Being, and for exclaiming with the Psalmist, “Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency,”—yet “he failed not, nor was discouraged; but whilst he poured out his soul an offering for sin,”

“for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame.” Nay, the very love of life—a principle the most powerful which the Almighty has interwoven in our nature—a principle which first exercises its empire over the human heart, and last resigns its authority—was itself sacrificed by our Saviour at the command of his God. Thus was “the Captain of our salvation made perfect” for the execution of his office “by sufferings.” Thus the termination of his life for ever broke the dominion of sin; thus on the cross did he triumph over all the powers of darkness; and thus, from his cradle to his grave, did he offer up the one great sacrifice of himself, “which needing not to be repeated, for ever perfecteth all them that are sanctified.”

But I shall no doubt be told, that though this must be admitted, yet it by no means seems to come up to the full import of several passages of scripture, which speak of our Saviour as a sin-offering. I readily allow it, and though I apprehend that what has been said will prove that our Saviour’s life with the greatest propriety may be considered as a sin-offering, yet I acknowledge that his death only fully accomplished the end and design which the sin-offering of Moses was appointed to accomplish. Indeed, I suspect that the abettors of the common import of sacrifices will account all that I have said upon this subject, notwithstanding its moral influence, to be rather an artful evasion of the doctrine which the Scriptures contain respecting it, than a full and a clear elucidation of it. If they do, I shall not be disappointed; and as it is to our Saviour’s death that the writers of the New Testa-

ment chiefly refer when they represent Christ as a sin-offering, I would solicit the reader's attention to the following proof and illustration of it.

I observe, then, that it appears evident from the name that is given in scripture to our Saviour when considered as a sin-offering, that his death, like that of the sin-offering under the law, represented the death of sin. The reader will remember that the victim employed in the Mosaic sin-offering received the name of that which it represented, and was with the greatest propriety denominated sin. Though the Hebrew word חטאת exactly corresponds to the Greek word ἁμαρτία, answering to the English word *sin*, yet frequently in the Septuagint, the Hebrew term is rendered by the periphrasis *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, which literally signifies *for sin*. Every person must perceive that the Greek periphrasis has been designed to be an explanation of the simple term when employed upon the subject of sacrifice, and that it implies the conviction of the Greek translators that the victim was slain *for* or *instead of sin*. It is a singular fact, that though the apostle, when treating of this subject, sometimes, in imitation of the Septuagint, employs the periphrasis *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, yet at other times, to leave not the shadow of an objection against the true import of our Saviour's sacrifice, he denominates him by the simple term ἁμαρτία. But this not only infallibly proves that Christ was a sin-offering,—it also infallibly proves my doctrine, that his death ~~was~~ the symbol designed to adumbrate the death of sin.

As this is a point of primary importance, I shall



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adduce a few passages in its support. In 2 Cor. v. 21, Paul, when speaking of our Saviour, says, God "hath made him *ἀμαρτίαν*, sin for us, that we might be the righteousness of God by him." This can only mean that God sent his Son into the world to die as a victim, in order to represent the death to which we ought to devote every sin; and when sin is thus dead to us, we are then, by the privileges which he gives us in his gospel, to become righteous by the practice of righteousness, to which God has called us. The writer to the Hebrews, (ix. 26, 28,) employs the same language, "Now once, in the end of the world,"—(*Gr., ages,*) i. e. at the end of the patriarchal and Jewish ages,— "hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." And then he adds, "Christ was once offered to bear"—(*Gr., to bear away, or to put away, as explained in the verse now quoted*)—"the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, *χωρίς ἀμαρτίας*, without sin, unto salvation."—That is, his design at his first coming was, by his death, exhibiting in symbol the death of sin, to remove away from us sin and iniquity, that we may be holy; but when he comes the second time to judgment, he will not be made the emblem of sin by dying again, but will complete the salvation of his people by raising them from the dead, and adjudging them to happiness according to their works. Since, then, the same name is given in scripture to our Lord, when considered as a victim, which was given to the victim of the sin-offering under the law, have we not every reason to conclude, that, notwithstanding the

superiority of his sacrifice, it was designed, as well as the other, to represent sin, the thing whose name he assumed ?

I said likewise, that in imitation of the Septuagint, the apostle sometimes employs the periphrasis, *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, to express more fully the meaning of the simple term. A single example will be sufficient to illustrate and confirm this. In Rom. viii. 3, 4, Paul says, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in (*Gr.*, by) us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." It is evident from the second verse, that the thing which the dispensation of Moses could not do was to free men from the law, that is, from the power and dominion of sin, and to raise them from that death in sin, mentioned Eph. ii. 1, in which the world lay at the coming of Christ. This was not because the dispensation of Moses could not point out that moral righteousness which God required, but because its fleshly ordinances, its sacrifices, wanted moral power and energy to lead the observers of them beyond themselves, and to induce them to cherish and pursue the temper and conduct which they adumbrated. To accomplish this, then, God sent into the world his own Son, made in all things like unto his brethren, and therefore every way qualified to instruct them by precept and example. And, what was more, by making him a sacrifice for sin, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, condemned sin in the flesh ; that is, by sentencing Christ to death as a victim, he passed a

sentence upon sin, which he represented, condemning it in the same manner to death; and exhibited in the death of his Son, the execution of that sentence.—For what purpose? That thus the body of sin being destroyed in us, we might not only “be free from the law of sin and death,” but might perform the righteousness which the law, as well as the gospel, required, by walking not after the desires of our sensual appetites, but after the dictates of our enlightened mind and conscience. It is impossible, I apprehend, not to feel the beauty and force which this interpretation gives to the passage; or not to perceive the confirmation which the passage gives to my doctrine.

I would observe further, that the whole phraseology of the New Testament, when employed upon this subject, is formed not merely in consistency with the doctrine which I maintain, but to express it in the most explicit manner. When, for example, sin is said to be dead to us by Christ’s death; and we to be alive to righteousness by his resurrection:—when he is said to be delivered to death for our offences; and to be raised again for our justification:—when we are said to be planted together in the likeness of his death; and to be planted together in the likeness of his resurrection:—when we are said to be conformable to his death; and to know the power of his resurrection; the same great and important truths are exhibited to view—the end and design of our Saviour’s death, and the end and design of our Saviour’s resurrection, are so distinctly marked, that they cannot be misunderstood.—When we put our sin to death, in imitation of the death of our Saviour; as the Jews put their sin to

death in imitation of the death of the victims which they slew, then the end of Christ's death, as a victim, is fully accomplished in us—then “we cease to do evil,” or are sanctified. Again: when “we rise from the dead works of sin, to serve the living God,” in the same manner as our Lord rose from the dead, to enjoy immortal life with God, the end of his resurrection is fully accomplished in us—then we “learn to do well,” or are justified. I must remark, that though it is only the former of these, the death of our Saviour, as representing the death of sin, that I have to explain at present, yet I thought it proper to mention likewise the latter, the resurrection of our Saviour, as respecting our resurrection from the death of sin to a life of righteousness, that the connexion which subsists between sanctification and justification—that the force of the apostle's reasoning upon these important subjects—and that the evidence for my doctrine, might the more evidently appear. Upon the point in question, these various expressions are perfectly decisive;—they invincibly prove that Christ was made sin for us, that he might exhibit in his death, that death to which every one of his followers ought to devote his sin and iniquity. Thus, then, he accomplished this great end of his mission; which, according to the express declaration of scripture, was “to save his people from their sins;” was “to redeem them from all iniquity;” or “to take away the sin of the world.”

I observe, further, that the manner in which our Lord was put to death, resembles so exactly the ritual enjoined in the sin-offering, that we receive an undoubted proof, from this circumstance, not only that

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he was a sacrifice for sin ; but that his sacrifice accomplished under the gospel, the same important purpose, which the other accomplished under the law.—As the victim, under the law, was presented before the Lord, and devoted to death within the court, and at the door of the tabernacle or temple ; so was our Lord carried there, and devoted to death by both Jews and Gentiles.—As the sin-offering under the law was carried without the camp, or the city of Jerusalem, as an abominable thing, so was our Lord conducted without the city bearing his reproach, and was looked upon as an abomination.—As the victim under the law was consumed, not with the hallowed fire which came down from heaven, but by the common or unhallowed fire of the world ; so was our Saviour consumed, not by that holy and heavenly zeal which animates the soul of the good—far less surely by the wrath or anger of the Supreme Being, which to affirm were blasphemy—but by that earthly and hellish zeal which inflames the souls of the wicked and the bigot ; and which fired both Jews and Gentiles with implacable rage against him.—And as the victim under the law, like sin, the thing which it represented, was deemed unclean and accursed ; so our Saviour was looked upon as unclean and accursed, and was loaded with the most dreadful imprecations. Is it possible, then, not to see the propriety of Paul's expression—an expression which could not be vindicated upon any other interpretation—when he says, (Gal. iii. 13,) “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us” ? As sin is the only thing which is, and ought to be, accursed ; when our Saviour was made sin, it is evident,

that the language, which it was proper to apply to the reality literally, was proper to be applied to the symbol figuratively; and hence, when our Lord was thus made a curse for us—for our happiness—that he might redeem us from the power of sin, he must, at the same time, have redeemed us from the curse, or condemnation to which we had subjected ourselves; for the moment that we cease to do evil, and learn to do well—the moment that we walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, there is no more curse or condemnation for us. In every point of view, then, the resemblance between the sin-offering under the law, and that of Christ under the gospel, is so striking, that we must be convinced, that both must have had one common nature, and that both must have been appointed to accomplish one common end.

Though these remarks are more than sufficient to establish the identity of the sin-offering under the law, and the sin-offering under the gospel, both in their nature and import; yet a few texts descriptive of the effect which both produced will throw additional light upon this interesting subject. It cannot escape the most inattentive reader, that, in scripture, sin is oft-times represented as a lawless tyrant, who keeps his slaves in the most abject bondage, and who must be put to death before they can obtain liberty and enjoy happiness; or, that his death, and their freedom, are said to be effected by the death of Christ. Hence, says the apostle, (Rom. vii<sup>th</sup> 6,) “Knowing this, that our old man”—the sin which held us in slavery before our conversion to Christianity—“that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be de-

stroyed, that henceforth we might not serve sin.”—Here the apostle not only represents sin as doomed to the shameful and lingering death of crucifixion, to which our Saviour, when he represented sin, was doomed; but he does more, he represents sin as having actually suffered crucifixion, along with Jesus; in order that the very body of the tyrant might be destroyed, like the body of the sin-offering without the camp; and that his wretched subjects might be delivered from his lawless commands. And, after a great deal of reasoning to the same purpose, which the reader ought carefully to consult, he adds, at the eighteenth verse, that being thus made free from the bondage of sin, their allegiance was transferred to another master—they became servants of righteousness.

But sin is not only in scripture, represented as a tyrant who was crucified along with our Saviour, that his subjects might be redeemed from his power, but also as a loathsome disease, which corrupts and defiles both the body and the soul of him who is infected with it. The description which the prophet Isaiah (i. 5, 6) gives of this moral distemper, as it affected the Jews in his time, must be present to every mind: “The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint: from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up; neither mollified with ointment.”—Contemplating sin too, under the image of an infectious and fatal disease, the prophet Jeremiah (viii. 22) thus exclaims: “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why, then, is not the health of my

people recovered?"—Whenever, therefore, in this figurative language, this disease is extinguished, is removed, or carried away, from the person infected with it, it is evident, that he will not only be free from danger and from pain, but that he will be cleansed and purified from all the filthiness and corruption of his former distemper.—Let us, then, apply this language to the subject before us. If the death of the victim under the law adumbrated the death of the sin, that is, of the disease, which the offerer then acknowledged, his cleansing from the pollution of his sin, or disease, must have been the inevitable consequence. But it is equally true, that if the death of the victim under the gospel adumbrated the same thing, wherever the death of Christ has its proper moral effect upon his followers, it must accomplish their purification—it must cleanse them from the pollution of their moral disease.—Hence appears the beauty and force of such expressions as the following: Rev. i. 5, "He hath washed us from our sins in his blood."—1 John i. 7, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."—Heb. i. 3, "When he had by himself purged our sins."—Heb. x. 29, "Counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing."—And to sum up all—who must not fully comprehend the moral pathos and energy of the words of Isaiah, (liii. 4, 5,) when applied to our Saviour as a sin-offering, according to my interpretation? "Surely he hath borne (*Heb. borne away*) our griefs; and carried (*Heb. carried away*, see Matt. viii. 17,) away our sorrows: yet we did esteem him"—certainly contrary to truth—"stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was



wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes are we healed."

Nor is this all: there are passages which bring the effect of the Jewish, and that of the Christian, sin-offering together in such a manner as is perfectly decisive in my favour. Such are the following, in which the cleansing or the sanctification of the unclean, is expressly mentioned as the end of both.—Heb. xiii. 11: "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burnt without the camp; wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."—Heb. ix. 11—14: "But Christ—neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption"—from the power and dominion of sin—"for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal"—(in several MSS. *holy*)—"spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God!"—To multiply quotations upon a point so evident, would only insult the candour of the reader.

We shall now be fully able to account for the expression which the inspired writers frequently employ, that the sacrifice of Christ was offered *for our sins*. It is universally admitted, that, amid the most formidable

and complicated temptations which ever conspired to overturn the foundations of human virtue, our Lord preserved his innocence and rectitude; he “did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” His sacrifice, therefore, could not exhibit to himself a symbol or representation of the way and manner in which he ought to put to death his own sins, that he might obtain forgiveness. But this very circumstance, which, while it displayed the greatness of his love towards us, rendered his sacrifice, as a symbol, of no avail to himself, rendered it, in every point of view, proper and valuable for his brethren. Hence, the words of the inspired writer are full to this point. Heb. vii. 26, 27: “For such an high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.” He must, therefore, to use the graphic language of the prophet, “have been wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;” all that he suffered was for our sakes—was to afford us, who had sins to put to death, a symbol admirably calculated to inspire us with the greatest hatred against sin—against sin, which rendered it necessary for our Lord to suffer; and which, by animating the passions of the Jews, subjected him to suffering,—admirably calculated to inspire us with the greatest ardour and fortitude in the contest which we are called to wage with the tyrant which had long held us in bondage,—admirably calculated to lead us, in imitation of our Lord, to resist every temptation, and

to overcome both the smiles and the frowns of the world. It is by "looking unto Jesus, therefore, when, for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despised the shame, and made his soul an offering for sin," that we can inhale a portion of his spirit, that we can breathe the air of heaven, that we can be strengthened with his might!—Clouded must be the understanding, and cold the heart, which cannot perceive, which cannot feel, the great moral import of what Paul says, when he declares, "That we are more than conquerors through him that loved us;" or of what the Church utters in triumph upon the downfall of heathen idolatry, (Rev. xii. 10, 11,) "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb; and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." It is impossible, I imagine, in language more beautiful and affecting, to inform us of the manner in which the patience and the fortitude, the faith and the hope, which shed a divine majesty around the captain of our salvation, when he loved not his life unto the death, become ours when placed in similar circumstances!—"For even hereunto are we called," says Peter, (1 Ep. ii. 21—25,) to do well, and patiently to suffer for it.—"For even hereunto are we called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;

but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously. Who his own self bare our sins—Ὁς τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν—*Who himself carried away our sins* in his body on the cross, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed: for we were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of our souls.”—Such, then, is the clear and consistent account of our Saviour’s sacrifice, as a sin-offering.

I likewise said, that the Scriptures give us clear information that our Saviour ought also to be considered as a burnt-offering.—That the reader may perceive this, he ought to remember the meaning and import which I formerly assigned to this sacrifice—that it was the symbol of the offerer’s dedicating himself to God in the practice of righteousness. It is evident, however, that before the victim could properly adumbrate this, it was absolutely necessary that it should be slain, in order that the various parts into which it was divided might represent the various actions of a good and virtuous life, which, in succession, should ascend, day and night, as a sweet savour to God. But when this was to be represented by an intelligent and moral being, it is equally evident, that his death, so far from being necessary for that purpose, would entirely defeat it; and that the only way in which he could accomplish this end, would be by a life devoted to the service of God—would be by a constant succession of works of righteousness.

As the burnt-offering under the law, then, was a symbol which daily exhibited to the Jews the nature and importance of a life of righteousness, and the

heavenly ardour and zeal which were necessary to warm the heart and animate the mind before their conduct could ascend as a sacrifice of a sweet savour to God, it might, with the greatest propriety, be considered as an example to that people continually inciting them to the love and practice of all righteousness. In the same manner, the glorious example of moral goodness, which, during his life, our Saviour exhibited for our imitation, in accounting it his meat and his drink to do the will of his Father, and in the heavenly ardour and zeal which inflamed his heart and animated his conduct, may likewise, with the greatest propriety, be considered as a continual burnt-offering of a sweet savour to God, constantly inciting us to the love and the practice of all righteousness. Thus, then, every person must perceive, not merely the beauty of this analogy, but that the whole burnt-offering which our Lord made of himself to God, stimulates us in the same manner, but with much more commanding power and permanency, than the burnt-offerings under the law did the Jews, to offer up ourselves, soul, body, and spirit, to him who hath "delivered us out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives."

To contemplate our Saviour's life, from his cradle to his grave, as one continual burnt-offering for our initiation, will not only animate us to make the same sacrifice of ourselves, but will display the beauty and force of all those passages in the word of God in which deeds of righteousness are denominated sacrifices. In this point of view, nothing can be more elegant and

impressive than the exhortation of the inspired apostle, Heb. xiii. 15, 16: "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Philipp. iv. 18 cannot be omitted when elucidating this subject: "But I have all and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things, which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." Philipp. ii. 17, in which the apostle speaks of his blood, if he should suffer martyrdom, as being poured out like a libation, or drink-offering, upon the sacrifice which he represents the Philippians as having made of themselves to God, is still more to the point. I give it in the words of Doddridge: "For if I should even be poured forth, as a drink-offering, on the sacrifice and ministration of your faith, I rejoice and congratulate you all." The two following passages are still more decisive. 1 Pet. ii. 5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Rom. xii. 1: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *την λογικην λατρειαν υμῶν*, even *your rational service*." These texts are surely more than sufficient to prove, that when, in imitation of our Lord, we devote our lives to the service of the Almighty, we offer up ourselves burnt-offerings; and deeds of obedience become a sweet savour—a phrase never applied to sin-offerings—become a sweet savour to God.

A very few remarks will be sufficient to shew that the important end which the peace-offering accomplished under the law, is accomplished much more perfectly under the gospel by our Saviour, considered as a peace-offering. The design of the former, as the reader will recollect, was to adumbrate to the Jews that peace which they would enjoy when they should offer up in a proper manner their sin-offering and their burnt-offering, that is, when they were sanctified and justified. The design of our Saviour, as a peace-offering, was to accomplish the same purpose—was to exhibit to us the same important lesson, that we, in imitation of him, may pursue the way that leads to peace; may cherish and enjoy it in our own minds when found; and may promote and diffuse it among our brethren. But it is evident that the remark which I made on our Saviour, considered as a burnt-offering, is equally applicable to him as a peace-offering. Though it was necessary that the victim of peace under the law should be slain, that the offerer, his family, and friends, might feast upon it, and that it might exhibit to the Jews what it adumbrated; yet it was by no means necessary that our Saviour should die, that he might exhibit to us an expressive example of that peace which is the effect of purity and righteousness. Hence it is to our Saviour's life that we are to look, not for the shadow, but for the very image of that internal harmony and equability of soul, which habitual virtue only can bestow, and which conscious innocence only can enjoy. It is impossible to contemplate the life of Christ, and not to perceive how perfectly his whole temper and conduct corresponded with this great design. Though his life, from

his birth to his crucifixion, was one continued scene of labour, of privation, of difficulty, of danger, yet as he was dead to sin, and alive to righteousness, the peace and tranquillity of his soul was never for a moment interrupted; he was still satisfied with himself, and with that feast of joy which a conscience void of offence spread before him; and the hope which in the darkest hour of adversity illumined his path was never extinguished. Nor did the mild and generous affections which tranquillized his own bosom terminate there, but animated every step of his private and public conduct, and spread around him peace and happiness. Wherever he went he poured the beam of instruction into the clouded bosom; lighted up the lamp of contentment and of patience in the dreary cell of poverty and distress; and awakened the smile of consolation and of hope on the pale cheek of sorrow and despair. Nor can it be forgotten, that that religion which it was the great business of his life to illustrate and establish, was admirably formed, like the life of its divine author, not only to diffuse a calmness and serenity over the soul, which the cares and anxieties of the world would otherwise have discomposed and harassed; but to unite together in one harmonious family of friends and brethren, the whole race of men, whether Jews or Gentiles, who had formerly been inspired with the keenest resentment, with the bitterest rancour against each other. It was the moral energy of this religion which enabled one of this virtuous brotherhood to address his companions with the most exalted affection and magnanimity, (Acts xx. 22—24,) “And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not



knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." When Christ, "the Prince of Peace," is thus considered as our great peace-offering, how admirably expressive are the words of Paul, (Eph. ii. 11—16,) "Wherefore remember, that ye, being in time past Gentiles—were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in (*Gr., by*) Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, For he is our peace, who hath made both"—Jews and Gentiles—"one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God" !

If then the peace-offering among the Jews continually reminded them "of that peace," (Isaiah xxxii. 17,) "which is the work of righteousness;" incited them to cultivate that temper and conduct which led to the possession of it; and inspired them with the warmest sentiments of gratitude and love to the Author of all felicity; it is easy to see how our Lord, considered as our peace-offering, should much more efficaciously accomplish the same important purposes to his people. In imitation of their Lord and Master, thousands in every age, amid all the sorrows to which life is heir, and

exposed to all the privations and dangers and torments which the ingenuity of malice could invent, or the power of cruelty execute, have held on "the way of righteousness" rejoicing; have experienced that "peace which passeth all understanding;" that "joy which is unspeakable and full of glory;" and which the apostle, from his own feelings, so beautifully describes, Rom. v. 1—5: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad into our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

But as our Saviour is in scripture oftentimes compared to the paschal lamb, a few remarks will be necessary, before I conclude this Essay, to shew the analogy which exists between them. From the explanation formerly given of the passover, the reader will remember, that the design of that symbol was to perpetuate the remembrance of the means which the Almighty employed to deliver the Jews from the bondage of Egypt. It will not be requisite to prove that the bondage which, at the advent of our Lord, we were under to sin, is often in scripture compared with the bondage which the Israelites endured in Egypt, or that our deliverance from the former bears a striking analogy to their deliverance from the latter. Now, as it was the death of the first-born of Egypt, of which the death of the pas-

chal lamb was the symbol, that effectuated the deliverance of the Israelites from the tyranny of Pharaoh, so was it the death of our Lord, as I have already fully shewn, that effectuated our deliverance from the tyranny of sin. There is, however, one remarkable difference between the death of the paschal lamb and that of our Saviour, which must not be omitted, namely, that the death of the former was only the shadow or the symbol of the means which procured the freedom of the Jews; but the death of the latter was the very image; or, to speak without a figure, was itself the means, which procured our freedom. Still, however, between the ritual enjoined concerning the death of the former, and the real circumstances which attended the death of the latter, a surprising resemblance does appear. The paschal lamb was without blemish; was brought into the camp or city on the tenth day of the month Abib; was slain upon the evening of the fourteenth, just as the fifteenth was going to commence; and not a bone of it was to be broken. Our Saviour, who was also without blemish, entered into Jerusalem upon the same day of the same month; was slain after the same interval; and at his death not a bone of him was broken. These remarkable coincidences not only vindicate the expression of the apostle, (1 Cor. v. 7,) "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us;" but prove that the circumstances of the two deliverances were adjusted by Him who knew the end from the beginning, with the most consummate wisdom.

But will this resemblance authorize us to assert, that the intention of the paschal lamb was to typify or adumbrate the death of Christ? Certainly not. I

readily acknowledge that every type must have a resemblance or similarity to the reality which it adumbrates; but we ought not to imagine that nothing else is necessary to constitute one thing the type of another. Were nothing else necessary, then Abel's sacrifice must have been the type of Noah's; Enoch's translation, the type of Elijah's; the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, the type of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and the beheading of Charles I. of England, the type of the beheading of Louis XVI. of France. From not attending to this, theologians have run into the greatest absurdities upon this subject, and have imagined that wherever they found in scripture two things or events that had any resemblance, the former must have been the type of the latter. This cannot be better illustrated than by the following example:—Almost all the commentators whom I have seen, maintain that the brazen serpent which Moses made in the wilderness, was a type of Christ. And what is the proof which they assign for this? Why, the words of our Saviour, (John iii. 14,) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." But is this really sufficient to prove that the former was the type of the latter? Then, by the same process of reasoning, it will follow, that the words of David, (Psalm 1. 3,) "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water," prove that every tree that grows upon the bank of a river, is planted and appointed by God to be a type of the man "who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." In both instances, the resemblance which is found between the things that are compared, is a sufficient foundation

for a simile ; but, besides this resemblance, divine appointment is absolutely necessary to constitute one thing the type of another ; and I have found no more evidence in scripture that the serpent was raised to be a type of Christ, than that the tree was planted to be the type of a good man.

Let us apply this, then, to the subject before us. I have already proved that the paschal lamb, instead of being appointed to be a type of Christ, was appointed for a very different purpose—was appointed to be the symbol of the first-born of Egypt, whose death was the means which accomplished the deliverance of Israel. The paschal lamb, therefore, had a distinct reality of its own ; and to seek for two realities to any symbol, is as absurd as to seek for two meanings to one expression, or two fulfilments to one prophecy. Nor is it unworthy of remark, that as the death of the first-born of Egypt—the means which accomplished the deliverance of the Jews from the bondage of Pharaoh—had a symbol, namely, the paschal lamb, appointed to keep up the remembrance of it among the Jews ;—so the death of Christ—the means which accomplished the deliverance of both Jews and Gentiles from the bondage of sin—has a symbol, namely, the Lord's Supper, appointed to keep up the remembrance of it among Christians. Hence it would not be more absurd to maintain, that the Lord's Supper was appointed to be the symbol of the death of the Egyptians, than it is to maintain that the paschal lamb was appointed to be a type of the death of Christ.

But since the death of the Egyptians terminated in the deliverance of the Jews from bondage and slavery,

and since the death of Christ likewise terminated in the deliverance of the Christians from bondage and slavery, it is evident, that these two deliverances, like the two sieges of Jerusalem formerly alluded to, must have had a mutual resemblance in several points. Since, then, the paschal lamb was appointed to adumbrate the former, it could not but have a resemblance to the latter; for that which resembles one of two things which have a resemblance, must of necessity resemble both. But as I have just now shewn that this resemblance will never constitute the relation which a symbol must bear to its reality, and which must depend upon divine appointment alone; neither will it warrant any one to conclude, that the symbol of any action or event already past, will lead those who may behold or may perform it, to the knowledge of a future action or event, what similitude or resemblance soever there may really be between these different actions or events when both have actually taken place. I can easily believe, for instance, that the Jews, when they celebrated their passover upon the day appointed for that festival, should be led, by that expressive action, to remember the means which God employed to deliver them from the power of Pharaoh; but I cannot imagine it possible that it could give them the least knowledge of our Lord's death. To take one particular, instead of many, let us consider the command, "that not a bone of the paschal lamb should be broken." That the Jews, from this circumstance, should have been led to the recollection, that not their own arm, but the arm of God, as formerly explained, broke the pride and the power of Egypt, and wrought salvation for them, I can easily

see, and can admire the aptitude of the sign to adumbrate the thing signified. But were it to be maintained, that the Jews from this knew and believed that not a bone of our Saviour would be broken at his death, when it is morally certain that not a Jew, from the day in which the passover was appointed till the day in which Christ suffered, had the least knowledge of his death at all, I should certainly be necessitated to withhold my assent. But that this circumstance attending our Lord's death teaches us, as the corresponding one in the paschal lamb did the Jews, that our deliverance from the power of sin was not effected by human wisdom and might, but by the power and spirit of God, which rested upon our Lord for that express purpose, I likewise see, and firmly believe: so wonderful are the works of God, and so admirably adjusted are his institutions to conduct us to knowledge, to virtue, and to happiness!

Upon the whole, then, I think it is evident, that the sacrifice under the law was so far from being appointed for typifying that of our Lord, that both were appointed to accomplish the same purpose—to lead men from the love and practice of sin, to the love and practice of righteousness, that the peace of God might reign in their hearts. Indeed, as far as I can judge, the only reason which has led men to imagine that the sacrifice of our Lord was adumbrated by that of Moses, has been, that our Lord's was the last of a long series of sacrifices, which all partook of the same nature, and all tended to produce the same end. This reason, however, is very far from being conclusive. Upon the same principle it might be maintained, that all the

sacrifices which were offered by the Jews prior to any given period of their history—to the building of the temple, for instance—were appointed to be types of those which were offered up afterward—a position, surely, that can never be supported. But though the sacrifice of our Lord partook of the same nature, and produced the same effect, yet it by no means follows that it was not more excellent in itself, and more powerful to produce that effect. On the contrary, the Scriptures constantly affirm, that whilst both partook of the same nature, and were designed to produce the same effect, the sacrifice of our Lord alone, from its superior excellence, produced that effect to its full extent. It is, however, enough to mention this at present, as it will be fully elucidated when we come to consider the doctrine of the Atonement.

I cannot resist the inclination I feel, of making the following observation. If it was the duty of the Jews to commemorate that symbolic rite which adumbrated the means of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, is it not our duty, with more exalted sentiments of gratitude and love, to commemorate that symbolic rite which adumbrates the means of our deliverance from the bondage of sin? Sorry am I to declare, that the inscriptural and superstitious ideas which have been entertained of this symbol, have made it rather an object of fear than of hope, of dread than of consolation; and thus, whilst the inconsiderate, and the rash, and the wicked, have dared to approach, the thoughtful, and the timid, and the righteous, have started back with terror. I have long been convinced that the man who is prepared for bowing his knees in prayer at the foot-



stool of the Eternal, is prepared for sitting down at the table of his Lord, and for shewing forth his death till he come again. If we believe scripture, the great end for which the Supper of our Lord was instituted, was to commemorate the consummation of that obedience which accomplished the great work of our redemption from sin. As the last act in the great drama of his mortal existence, it is impossible to contemplate his death as a solitary, as an insulated event. Every other action, or event of his life, however fraught with instruction it may be, may be contemplated alone ; nor does it irresistibly summon the rest before us. But it is impossible, at least I have always found it impossible, to contemplate the last scene of our Saviour's sufferings in this manner. His death is, as it were, the centre, where the various rays of moral excellence that adorned and dignified his character all meet, and shine with a glory more than human. His death is the chord which, when touched, awakens in our recollection all the charities, all the affections which he felt for us, and vibrates in unison with the finest feelings, with the most exalted sentiments that inhabit the human heart. His death is an event, which by its bearings and associations, brings in solemn review before us all the actions, all the vicissitudes, which were crowded into the most eventful life which was ever exhibited. The man who does not perceive, nay, I would rather say, the man who does not feel, the propriety of the apostles of our Lord dwelling so much upon his death, the propriety of our commemorating the circumstances which attended it, must have a narrow understanding and a cold heart. For my own part, I confess that I could never contemplate

the sufferings of Jesus without admiring his character ; that I could never admire his character without loving his person ; and that I could never love his person without inhaling his spirit. To think upon his death, therefore, is not only the means of becoming virtuous, but the very thought is virtue.

To conclude : what opinion soever may be entertained respecting the nature and design of sacrifices, I imagine that the interpretation which has been here given of their import, and the things signified by them, must appear to be simple, easy, and perfect. To shew an exact agreement, no intricate or abstract reasoning has been employed ; no straining or distorting of circumstances has been found necessary ; and no part of the resemblance has appeared defective : there is nothing in the sign which has not its accomplishment in the thing signified, and nothing in the thing signified which has not its counterpart in the sign. I must not omit, that the account which I have given is perfectly consistent with the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being,—suited to the most exalted ideas which we can form of his designs to purify and to sublime his creatures from all iniquity to the resemblance of his own exalted character,—suited to that benevolence and mercy which are essential to his nature, and which, without any foreign stimulus, are ever watchful to reform, and accept, and cherish, all who are the proper objects of his benevolence and mercy—all who return to him in sincerity and truth. It is equally consistent with the state, and the duty, and the hopes of man. With his state—surrounded with temptations, and too often yielding to their power. With his duty—to put to

death every thought and word and deed that is contrary to his nature and his happiness ; and to devote himself, soul, body, and spirit, to the service of his Creator. And with his hopes—that the end of the perfect man and the upright shall be peace and assurance for ever ; that none shall seek the face of the Most High in vain ; that his God and Father will accept of the prayers, and repentance and obedience of every one of his children ; and that, having in some measure rendered him conformable to his own glorious image, he will, in due time, translate him to the mansions of immortal purity and righteousness and peace, where his dispositions and affections shall still grow in sanctity ; where the virtues which the hand of his Creator had planted in his nature, and had cherished by the ordinances of religion here, shall be brought to maturity—shall still flourish and bring forth fruit with increasing abundance, to the glory of the great Husbandman, whilst eternity rolls along.

FINIS.

*At the end of the Essay the Author had made the following*

### MEMORANDUM.

If I should never write this Treatise over again, I beg leave to state, that in the course of my investigations I find that some things, of no great importance indeed, but still of sufficient importance as to be worthy of correction, ought to be attended to.

The principal of these are the following :

1. I have placed the laver [p. 72] within the court, nearer to the entrance of it than the altar of burnt-offering. From Exod. xxx. 18, I find that this was not the true situation of these two symbols. The altar of burnt-offerings stood next to the entrance of the court, and the laver stood further in toward the west, immediately before the entrance into the first tabernacle. I am now fully convinced, that this was proper to adumbrate the things for which they were appointed; and I wish it to be understood, that the sin-offering was all that was appointed for adumbrating the sin of the people, and consequently for cleansing them, in order to prepare them for offering their burnt-offering. The laver, therefore, had no respect to the people; it respected the priests alone; and their washing in it before they entered into the first tabernacle, taught them the superior sanctity which they, as the peculiar ministers of religion, ought to cultivate, when they engaged in the solemn ordinances of religion. In short, it taught them, that in proportion to the nearness of their approaches to God, ought to be the degree of sanctity which they cultivated.

2. I have said [pp. 86, 87], that salt was the emblem of wisdom.\* I am now convinced that it was not, but that it

\* The author had made these alterations of love, charity, kindness, benevolence, for wisdom and prudence, which have been followed in the text. But it is evident, that had he revised the work for the press, he would have made further alterations in the paragraph in which the above terms are used, to produce a complete correspondence in all its parts. How far this defect required remedying will appear by comparing the printed paragraph with the following transcript of the original copy  
 "It is well known, that salt was always enjoined to be presented along

was the emblem of love, affection, and kindness. Mark ix. 50: "Have salt in yourselves"—cultivate love and benevolence in your hearts—"and live at peace one with another"—and the effect of your having salt, kindness in your disposition, will be, that you will cultivate peace with one another. Col. iv. 6: "Let your speech be always with grace," that is gracefulness, "seasoned with salt;" tempered with that kindness and goodwill which will diffuse a gracefulness over all you say. Matt. v. 13: "Ye are the salt of the earth."—You are to be the ambassadors of a Saviour of love and kindness, as I am the ambassador of a God of love and kindness. Hence, you are to reconcile men

with the shew-bread; and that, under the law, salt was employed as the emblem of wisdom or prudence. Nor is it difficult to perceive why it was chosen for this purpose. As salt preserves from corruption those subjects to which it is applied, so wisdom or prudence can alone preserve from moral corruption the heart and conduct of every man. In allusion to this, our Lord says to his disciples, 'Ye are the salt of the earth,' who by your wisdom and prudence in imparting religious instruction—the bread of life—shall preserve the world from universal corruption. And again, 'Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another';—display that wisdom and prudence in your conduct, which will conciliate the affections of all, and preserve you in peace and unity. The same metaphor is employed by St. Paul: (Col. iv. 5, 6:) 'Walk in wisdom towards them that are without; redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every one' When the meaning of this symbol is thus ascertained, the propriety of the following injunction must be manifest. Lev. ii. 13: 'Every oblation of thy meat (Heb. *bread* or *flour*) offering, shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of the Lord to be lacking from thy bread-offering. with all thy offerings—of this kind—thou shalt offer salt.' Thus, the Israelites were informed, in the most striking manner, that the greatest wisdom and prudence ought to direct every step of their moral and religious conduct; and thus, the ministers of religion in particular were taught, that it was their duty, in no common degree, to cultivate the wisdom that 'cometh down from the Father of Lights,' in explaining the doctrines and enforcing the precepts of religion, and in choosing the most proper opportunities, the most effectual modes of communicating instruction, in order to preserve themselves and others from the corrupt maxims and manners of the world."

The above remarks will require also to be kept in mind in reading p. 289, where salt has been considered as the emblem of wisdom.

to God, to one another, and to their own minds. And if you do not cultivate charity with one another, and promote it by your doctrine in the world, how can it ever lead to the love and practice of that love which is the fulfilling of the law? Lev. ii. 13: "With all thy offerings offer salt." This is admirably explained by our Saviour, Matt. v. 21—24: "If you bring your gift to the altar," (without salt,) that is, having any malice or quarrel with any one, "go, first be reconciled to him, and then come (with salt) with love and kindness in your heart, and offer your sacrifice."—I cannot but add, that salt was absolutely necessary too, to warn men of the danger of making religion of hatred. If our services to God were salted, should we ever persecute and think it a religious sacrifice to God?—No salt on the sin-offering, because sin is neither the object of affection, nor does it promote peace and love. On the contrary, it is the object of abhorrence, and the parent and nurse of all that malice and hatred and war which have tormented men, and deluged the world with blood.

3. Long after I had composed this Treatise,\* I came to the consideration of Adam's apostacy, or original sin. When considering the cherubim placed at the garden of Eden, I was led to investigate that subject more accurately than I had formerly done. The interpretation which I have given in Adam's apostacy, appeared to me then, and still appears to me to be the true one. But as that was very different from the interpretation which I at first gave in this on sacrifices, I judged it proper for me to cut out the leaves, and to paste in those, which are now found in this, which I think is right. But as I am convinced there are some few expressions scattered up and down the Treatise, which are formed to agree to the first interpretation of the cherubim which I gave, and as these may be thought to want that consistency with the other parts which they ought to have, I judge it necessary to mention the reason of this, lest I should not live to write the whole over again, and to give it that consistency which, in some small things, it wants at present, and which, I am sure, I could give it.

\* The author finished this work December 31st, 1814. [Editor.]

4. In pp. 69—71, I have explained the curtains there mentioned to be the curtains that surrounded the court. Since I wrote this, it has struck me, that they might be the curtains that surrounded or inclosed the first tabernacle.—This I mention merely as a subject of future inquiry; and if Providence spare me to write the whole over, this, among some other things, shall be fully investigated.

5. From Lev. vii. 8, I find that the skin of the burnt-offering was given to the priest. This had not occurred to me when I wrote this Treatise. Engaged as I am, every day, and, I may add, every hour, with the doctrine of the Trinity, and having the Atonement to elucidate and compose, before the whole, which I have in view, is completed, I have not had leisure to attend to this circumstance, which I design, however, to do, if ever I should have leisure to write this over again.—Could this signify, that when a man dedicated himself to the Lord in the practice of virtue and of religion, the external appearance, the outward splendour of his conduct would reflect an honour and advantage upon the minister who had been the instrument, in the hand of God, of leading the offerer to dedicate himself to the Almighty?—This may be its import. I shall, however, inquire before I ever again transcribe the Essay. *Non omnia possumus.*











